















*J. Huntington*

LADY, HUNTINGDON  
PORTRAYED;

INCLUDING

BRIEF SKETCHES OF SOME OF HER FRIENDS  
AND CO-LABORERS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"THE MISSIONARY TEACHER," "SKETCHES OF MISSION LIFE," ETC.



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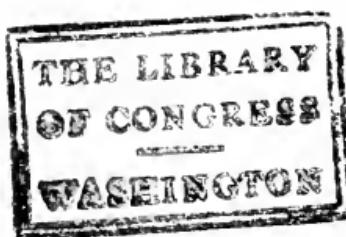
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## INTRODUCTION.

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AT the commencement of the last century, a death-like slumber rested upon the Church of Christ. Spiritual life remained, however, in the hearts of a few. During the dark night which intervened between the decline of the Lutheran Reformation and the rise of the Wesleyan revival, the Gospel had some witnesses of its Divine power. The Wesley family, for several generations, had been earnest defenders of evangelical truth, and the maternal grandfather of John Wesley, Dr. Samuel Annesley, had scattered precious seeds of a spiritual religion. Philip Doddridge and Dr. Watts, with many kindred spirits, were

removing the obstacles to the ushering in of a better day upon the nations. And when that day did dawn, under the honored labors of the Wesleys and Whitefield, the *poor* were the first to rejoice in its light. The benighted colliers of Kingswood, the pleasure-seeking crowds of Kennington Common, the untaught, uncared-for inmates of the jails and almshouses, and the almost heathen multitudes in the huts of poverty throughout England, heard with astonishment the words of truth, and fell subdued at the feet of Christ. Not only did the chains of their thralldom fall off, but *tongues* were given them to proclaim their freedom to others. From the ranks of the lowly came wisdom which confounded the worldly wise, and from classes in society which had been dumb in religion, proceeded an eloquence which over-powered all the oratory of the schools.

So general were awakenings and conversions among the masses, that, to an unattentive observer, it might seem as if persons of noble birth, the rich and powerful, were like the snow-covered mountain top, while the spring showers were gladdening the vale. But not so. The leaders of the great work, by their talents, learning, and, most of all, their spiritual baptism, gained trophies to the Redeemer from the colder and no less irreligious circles of the aristocracy.

Illustrations of piety among the lowly have been frequently given to the Church and the world. The biographies of John Nelson, Samuel Hick, and William Dawson, with kindred writings, have done great good. But lest the Church should forget that, *with God*, the conversion of the rich and noble in birth is possible, it needs to know that the Gospel ministry has had some seals among them also. Thus the power

of Divine grace may be seen as well in the humility of the great, as in the sanctified exaltation of the poor.

To extend the influence of this great truth, we have written these pages.

The author trusts that it will assist also in illustrating that eventful portion of the history of the Church to which it belongs. He hopes that it will stimulate some to labor and suffer reproach for Christ's sake. If this be accomplished, he will rejoice that he has not written in vain.

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# L A D Y   H U N T I N G D O N P O R T R A Y E D.

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## CHAPTER I.

### LIFE WELL BEGUN.

THE family of LADY SELINA SHIRLEY was one of the noblest of England. The records of her ancestors contained some of the honored names of its history. Their princely mansions had descended through many generations, and wealth and noble blood had entailed their accustomed attendants of self-complacency and forgetfulness of God. Yet there had been individuals in her family of true piety. Among its most cherished names, and belonging, on the father's side, to one of its purest characters, we notice that of *Washington*, a name associated with many virtues.

The father of Lady Selina was Washington Shirley, titled Earl of Ferrers. She was the second of three daughters, and was born at Chartley, August 24th, 1707. Her childhood was characterized by a quiet thoughtfulness. An incident which occurred in her ninth year, made a deep impression upon her mind.

In one of her walks she met the funeral procession of a child about her own age. From curiosity she followed it to the grave. Here the sight of the corpse deeply affected her, and awakened such thoughts of the eternal world, that, standing on the brink of the open grave, she prayed that God would fit her for heaven. She turned away from the solemn place with many tears. She often returned to it to renew her serious impressions, and, to her latest years, referred with interest to this occasion of her first religious awakening.

Though mingling in fashionable society, and surrounded by those who plunged recklessly into worldly amusements, as the end for which they lived, her interest was in more serious

things. She possessed naturally a strong mind, and a love for knowledge, which she cultivated to the full extent of the means afforded by the times in which she lived. While other young ladies of her age were attracting attention by the expensive decorations of their persons, Lady Selina, attired with a plainness that ever suited her taste, won the good opinions of the court circles in which she moved, by her rich stores of knowledge and refined cultivation. She could not claim the attractions of marked personal beauty, though she was favored with the advantages of great native dignity. Her personal presence elicited interest and commanded respect, even in early womanhood. She was not easily passed by or forgotten. While the more vain of her sex *sought* attention, observation and remark were naturally drawn toward her. Without seeking it, and almost without knowing it, she became the center of attraction and influence.

It was natural that a woman of such a cast of mind should be sought in marriage, not by a

fashionable and pleasure-seeking man, but by one who, at least, had high religious sentiments and refined mental culture.

Such was young Lord Huntingdon, who sought and obtained her hand in marriage. He belonged to a family no less noble than her own; the connection seemed in every respect suitable, and proved a happy one. Lord Huntingdon's freedom from the vices of his position and of his times, his spotless integrity, and his uniform respect for religion and religious people, caused him to appear to those about him among whom there was but little knowledge of true religion, as a pious man. But he does not appear ever to have become the subject of renewing grace. He once made the following remark in a conversation with Wesley: "The morality of the Bible I admire, but the doctrine of the atonement I cannot comprehend." Thus, leaning upon his philosophy rather than faith, upon morality rather than love to God, he was never able to sympathize with the holiness of heart which became the constant aim and ulti-

mate experience of the countess, his wife. Yet, in the true spirit of the gentleman and kind husband, he never interfered with her religious convictions. The plans her sense of duty dictated, she was permitted to carry out without embarrassment from him. At one time, he was requested, by high authority, to lay restraint upon what was termed his wife's fanaticism. But he repelled the suggestion with indignant feelings.

The family name of Lord Huntingdon was Hastings. His ancestral seat was Donnington Park, in Leicestershire. The Park at Donnington is celebrated for its fine old majestic oaks, and other forest trees. The grounds are alternately thrown into bold swells, and sunk into sweeping valleys, thus presenting for a great distance, scenes of picturesque beauty and interest.

Near the northern extremity of the grounds is a precipice called Donnington Cliff, a spot much admired for its wild romantic scenery, for its bold projecting crags, hanging woods, and

the clear, quiet waters of the River Trent at its base.

The old residence of the Huntingdons has long since been pulled down, but the present mansion in Donnington Park is regarded as one of the most architecturally beautiful and well-arranged mansions in England, worthy of the wealth and position of the family.

Thus situated by her marriage relation, Lady Huntingdon continued her established habit of attention to the outward performances of religious duties. She visited the poor of her neighborhood, and bestowed upon them freely such things as their poverty required. She was particularly attentive to the sick, and was constantly mindful of the spiritual as well as temporal wants of all her dependents. She fasted regularly, laid upon herself frequent self-denials, and was habitually faithful to the duty of private prayer. Yet in all this she had no clear idea of the faith which brings salvation. Her mind was without religious comfort. She was, as were the Wesleys for many years, seeking to

be saved, if not by works only, *by works and faith.*

But God never leaves the earnest inquirer after salvation uninstructed in the more excellent way. His providential hand is near to guide and uphold. While Lady Huntingdon was thus sincerely but erroneously seeking to be justified before God, the Wesleys, Whitefield, and a few co-laborers were beginning to excite, attention, having just escaped from a long legal bondage into the glorious liberty which is by faith in Christ. Their preaching was with power, and to many they seemed beside themselves. But to multitudes their word became as life to the dead. Mr. Ingham, the friend and companion of Wesley in his mission to Georgia, having become a partaker with him of forgiveness of sins by faith, preached with great success in Yorkshire County, and visited the neighborhood of the residence of the sisters of Lord Huntingdon, the Ladies Hastings. They attended his preaching through curiosity, and were awakened by the Spirit of God. Lady Mar-

garet was the first who received converting grace. In a conversation, soon after, with Lady Huntingdon, she remarked, with a glow of holy emotion: “Since I have known and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, for life and salvation, I have been as happy as an angel.”

Her sister saw at once that her own heart knew no such feelings. She became more dissatisfied with herself, and convicted of her sinfulness. But she only turned for help to greater austerities, and more severe self-imposed duties. At this critical point she was taken sick. Death approached, and she was alarmed. She could find no comfort in all she had done. She was afraid to die, for the forgiving smiles of her Saviour did not rest upon her. In this her time of need the words of Lady Margaret came to her mind with new weight. “Since *I believed in the Lord Jesus Christ*,” was a sentence which flashed light upon her mind. She began, amid pain and weakness, to cry to Jesus to save her, and to save her now. In a moment the cloud parted, and Jesus, with joy and peace,

appeared. While she was wondering at the mighty change, her disease had disappeared, so that almost at the same moment she was made whole both in body and soul.

The new life into which Lady Huntingdon was thus introduced, became apparent to all. She did not relax, but increased her labors of love. But now she performed them as privileges to be enjoyed, and not, as heretofore, as painful duties imposed upon her by the stern requirements of religion. She became even more free in bestowing her wealth upon the needy, and more diligent in the delightful work of public and private worship. We shall see that her trials were many, and that at times she passed through deep waters of affliction, but we cannot perceive, by any expression that dropped from her lips, that she ever doubted that at this time, instantly, and in the way we have stated, she passed from death to life, from darkness to light. So clearly was the great Methodist revival characterized, from its beginning, *by a knowledge of sins forgiven.*

## CHAPTER II.

## STRIKING CONTRASTS OF CHARACTER.

THE change in Lady Huntingdon's character was not only a matter of surprise, but of annoyance, in the court circles in which she moved. Her opposers not being able to induce her husband to restrain by personal authority the exercise of her religious convictions, nevertheless secured, through him, the special services of Bishop Benson, to convince her that she had become pious overmuch. But the truth from her lips was too mighty for an opposing bishop. She supported her sentiments, and defended her experience from the authority of the Church of England, and the higher authority of the Word of God. She pressed with convincing earnestness upon the prelate the solemn responsibility of his high station in the Church. He came to reprove, but he found himself fairly and

seriously reproved; and though he had come to instruct, yet he stood corrected on the most vital question of religion—the work of grace upon the heart. Disturbed in feeling, he hastily rose to depart, remarking that George Whitefield was the author of the errors of her ladyship, and he regretted that he had ordained him. “My lord,” replied the countess, “mark my words: when you are on your dying bed, that will be one of the few ordinations you will reflect upon with complacence.”

This prediction was strikingly verified. When the bishop was on his dying bed, he sent Whitefield ten guineas as a token of respect, and requested an interest in his prayers. He had then happily learned the way of salvation more perfectly.

The evangelical character of Lady Huntingdon's religious experience was apparent, not only as it stood thus contrasted with the merely moral sentiments of the professedly pious, but in its difference from her own former feelings,

and its radical opposition to the spirit of most of her associates. An incident which occurred not long before her conversion, will show into what improprieties she could *then* be led, and we shall see how strong she became by grace against such examples.

On one occasion, spirited debates were going on in the House of Peers. It was a time of great political excitement, and the females of the nobility participated in it. In this state of things the peers closed the doors against all but members of Parliament. The lady politicians resented this. Ten of them, (including Lady Huntingdon,) bearing the highest titles of the female nobility, appeared at the door of the House of Lords, at the early hour of nine o'clock in the morning, demanding admittance. They were politely told that the chancellor had forbidden it. They sneered at the ill-breeding of a "mere lawyer," and renewed their demand to be permitted to go up stairs privately. The officer, seeing their undue persistence, peremptorily refused. Their leader replied that

they would enter in spite of the chancellor and the whole House. Suiting their actions to their words, they remained at the door, without sustenance, until five o'clock in the afternoon, reporting, at short intervals, their presence to those within by noisy kicks and raps upon the door. The peers having been early apprised of the character of the siege set up against them, gave orders that the door should not be opened until the siege was raised. As the day drew to a close the noise was shrewdly suppressed. The lords, supposing the foe had retired, opened the doors, when in rushed the invaders, and took a favorable position for hearing and seeing the debaters. Here they remained until the House adjourned, about eleven o'clock at night, applauding or showing their dislike, as suited their humor.

How differently does Lady Huntingdon appear in the following narrative of a most interesting occurrence. It was her custom, after her conversion, to drop into the humble cottages of the peasantry, during her rambles through

her lordly domains, and speak to them concerning the salvation of their souls. The following sanctified effects of one of these visits is given in her own words, in a letter to Mr. Wesley.

... "I walked a little way by the water side, where are some houses for the poor, in number about six, two of which are ale-houses, and appear to be the harbor for the devils themselves; I called in at one of these houses to see a poor woman that I used to think meant well, in order to stir her up a little. After talking with her, she told me she had been asking one of her neighbors if she had any hope of knowing before she died whether she would be happy; and they both wished to know my opinion. I answered, that as they believed, so it would be done unto them; and added that I would come down and read to them. . . . I took a friend with me, and found her apparently in great bodily suffering, but on feeling her pulse I could not find it so much as ruffled; but her sweats were the most violent I had ever seen. Her agony of mind was so great she

could not contain, but cried out: 'This is nothing. I may possibly be dying, and what will come of my soul? O, pray for me! O, mercy! mercy!'

"Her trouble and misery were such as brought tears from the eyes of all of us. I beheld her with my heart filled with love and pity. I said: 'Now, where are all your good works? What has become of all your honest labor for sixty years? What! are you a perishing sinner at last?'

"She answered: 'It will not do; I am too bad to be saved.'

"Her tears, and the expressions of her sufferings, were more than can be described. I said: 'Well, now that you are quite lost, you will find Him who came to seek and to save just such as you are. Now, my life upon it, he will soon come.'

"'What,' she cried, 'to such a sinner as I am?'

"'Yes,' I replied. 'It was for such only that he died.'

“‘I shall die,’ she exclaimed.

“‘Peace will be your portion first,’ I insisted, but she refused to be comforted.

“The next day I found her the same. We received the Sacrament together, and I found the presence of the Lord there. As soon as it was over, I said: ‘O, what a living Saviour have you!’ The tears were still flowing down her face with all the marks of misery, as before; the sight was enough to affect a heart of stone. About six at night word came to me that she was in the agonies of death, and desired to take leave of her children. This was her last plunge into the deep. Her soul and body were as if in hell. Four men were not sufficient to hold her in bed, so great was Satan’s power over her. After these hours of suffering, her soul was brought into the liberty of God’s people. The poor people were surprised to find her on a sudden lie so still. She continued twelve hours, as it were, feeding on the fatted calf. She told them that she had not slept, but had been all night partaking of the

joys of heaven. When I came at noon to see her, she exclaimed: 'O, my lady, my dear lady, what great things the Lord hath done for me! I have neither doubt nor fear. He hath given me that peace that the world can neither give nor take away.' Her looks were altered. She lay with such sweetness and complacency in her countenance, that I delighted to behold her.

"'You have saved my soul,' she said; 'I have such tastes of the Divine love as are not to be expressed. O, what a thing it is to have the heart all flaming with love to the Lord Jesus!'

"From that hour she has felt no pain, either of body or mind. She exhorts all who come near her to turn to the Lord."

Lady Huntingdon appends to this narrative the following significant declaration: "Much of my time is taken up in bringing souls to seek after the Lord. I have some difficulty in keeping them from clinging to me; such wondrous love they bear me. This I know must be for

the Lord's sake, for in me dwelleth no good thing." The happy death, soon after, of the woman whose conversion is above described, is given in another letter to Mr. Wesley.

So soon does the scene change from the arrogance of aristocratic pride to the humility of the humble poor, when grace enters the heart. How strikingly contrasted is the spirit of the incident in the House of Peers, with that of the humble laborer in the home of the unknown and neglected.

The Lord greatly blessed the efforts of the countess. She once spoke to a workman who was repairing a garden wall, and pressed him to take some thought concerning eternity and the state of his soul. Some years after, she was speaking to another on the same subject, and said to him: "Thomas, I fear you never pray nor look to Christ for salvation."

"Your ladyship is mistaken," replied the man. "I heard what passed between you and James some time since, and the word designed for him took effect on me."

“How did you hear it?”

“I heard it,” replied the man, “on the other side of the garden, through a hole in the wall, and I never shall forget the impression I received.”

Lady Huntingdon’s efforts for the salvation of souls, which she began to put forth immediately on her conversion, were not *confined* to the poor. She invited her fashionable acquaintance to hear the preaching of the Wesleys and Whitefield. She made the occasion of their sickness, or an extraordinary occurrence in their life, the means of religious instruction. Her talents, learning, and consistent piety won their respect. Her faithful reproofs and rigid self-denial provoked their sneers, though they could not despise her. We shall see that her earnest labors were blessed with some fruit from this class also.

The following anecdotes and letters will further show the striking contrast between the proud devotee of worldly honors and fashions, and the humble Christian. They will also

exhibit some of the difficulties in the way of holiness, which meet the rich and honored, illustrating the solemn declaration of the Saviour; “How *hardly* shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God.”

Among the countess’s personal friends was the Duchess of Marlborough, wife of the great Duke of Marlborough, so renowned in English history. A writer who had ample means of knowing her character, thus describes it:

“Her conversation and deportment were alike irresistible, from a just and delightful mixture of softness and sprightliness. A little petulance and caprice of temper; a little heedlessness of manner; a good deal of her sex’s pride, and yet more of its vanity; a quickness of imagination which sometimes hurried her to the verge of imprudence, and a natural acuteness and readiness of wit which as often extricated her, were the characteristics of this woman’s masculine mind and intriguing spirit, which, by her influence in the cabinet, may be said to have swayed the destinies of Europe

with greater effect than did her husband by his talents in the field."

Lady Huntingdon, having conversed with this distinguished woman on the subject of personal religion, and led her to the preaching of the leading Methodists, had thus occasioned the following letters:

"My dear Lady Huntingdon is so very good to me, and I do really feel so very sensibly all your kindness and attention, that I must accept your very obliging invitation to accompany you to hear Mr. Whitefield, though I am still suffering from the effects of a severe cold. Your concern for my improvement in religious knowledge is very obliging, and I hope I shall be the better for all your excellent advice. God knows we all need mending, and none more than myself. I have lived to see great changes in the world, have acted a conspicuous part myself, and now hope, in my old days, to obtain mercy from God, as I never expect any at the hands of my fellow-creatures. The Duchess of Ancaster, Lady Townsend,

and Lady Cobham were exceedingly pleased with many observations in Mr. Whitefield's sermon at St. Sepulcher's Church, which has made me lament ever since I did not hear it, as it might have been the means of doing me some good—*for good, alas! I do want.* But where, among corrupt sons and the daughters of Adam, am I to find it? Your ladyship must direct me. You are all goodness and kindness, and I often wish I had a portion of it. Women of wit, beauty, and quality cannot hear too many humiliating truths, they shock our pride. But we must die. We must converse with earth and worms. . . . .

“Many thanks to Lady Fanny for her good wishes. Any letter from her and my dear, good Lady Huntingdon, are always welcome, and always, in every particular, to my satisfaction. *I have no comfort in my own family,* therefore must seek for that pleasure and gratification that others can impart. I hope you will shortly come and see me, and give me more of your company than I have had lat-

terly. In truth, I always feel more happy and more contented after an hour's conversation with you, than I do after a whole week's round of amusement. *When alone, my reflections and recollections almost kill me*, and I am forced to fly to the society of those I detest and abhor. Now, there is Lady Frances Sanderson's great rout to-morrow night; all the world will be there; I must go. I do hate that woman as much as I do hate a physician. But I must go, if for no other purpose than to mortify and spite her. This is very wicked, I know, but I confess all my little peccadilloes to you, for I know your goodness will lead you to be mild and forgiving, and perhaps my wicked heart may gain some good from you in the end."

With this great but wicked woman, Lady Huntingdon never ceased to labor, to bring her proud heart to Christ. The duchess's fiery temper, yielding to no other, quailed before the countess's quiet goodness. She quarreled with every member of her own family, and with

most of her acquaintances. Being crossed once by her husband, she cut off her own beautiful hair, because she knew it was the object of his special delight. She used, with her characteristic freedom, to tell the incident after his death, and allude, with deep emotion, to the fact that she found her ringlets, laid away by his own hand, among his choicest treasures.

As might be expected, she was much afraid to die. When very sick, a few years before her death, she heard the physician express his alarm for her, and order a blister. Raising herself suddenly, she exclaimed with energy, "I will not be blistered, and I won't die."

The Duchess of Buckingham was another subject of Lady Huntingdon's labors. This lady's pride exceeded, if possible, that of the Duchess of Marlborough. She had been persuaded to attend the preaching of the leaders of Methodism. Her heart greatly resented the doctrines they taught. She expressed her

resentment of them in the following note, addressed to Lady Huntingdon:

“I thank your ladyship for the information concerning the Methodist preachers. Their doctrines are most repulsive, and strongly tinctured with impertinence and disrespect toward their superiors, in perpetually endeavoring to level all ranks, and do away with all distinctions. It is monstrous to be told you have a heart as sinful as the common wretches that crawl on the earth. This is highly offensive and insulting; and I cannot but wonder that your ladyship should relish any sentiments so much at variance with high rank and good breeding.

“Your ladyship does me infinite honor in your obliging inquiries after my health. I shall be most happy to accept your kind offer of accompanying me to hear your favorite preacher, and shall wait your arrival. The Duchess of Queensbury insists on my patronizing her on this occasion; consequently she will be an addition to our party.”

This woman, poor indeed in her wealth of nobility, carried her pride into the very realms of death. At the death of her only son, after dressing in a vain show, with her own hand, his poor dust, she sent to the Duchess of Marlborough, to borrow, for the funeral pomp, the car on which the great Marlborough was borne to the grave. The duchess refused the request with scorn, saying that no other corpse should profane the car on which her Lord Marlborough had lain.

The haughty Buckingham replied, that she had engaged the undertaker to make a finer car for twenty pounds.

She also arranged the parade and ceremony for her own burial, and dressed her own wax figure, to be placed in Westminster Abbey. When death came to humble her pride, by bringing her to the dust, on a level with the meanest and most obscure, Lady Huntingdon sought renewedly an opportunity to convey to her the consolations of religion. But she repelled her solicitations.

Such were some of the characters whom Lady Huntingdon sought to turn to Christ, and against whose wide-spread influence she maintained a Christian walk.

We shall see that her influence prevailed over a few of the nobility. They became, by her instrumentality, the friends of Christ, and her efficient co-laborers.

## CHAPTER III.

## EARLY METHODIST CO-LABORERS.

THUS far we have seen Lady Huntingdon, as a serious but unrenewed youth, unsuccessfully attempting to stem the current of the irreligious influences of a position of wealth and honor, in her own feeble strength. In this state we have seen her at one time weeping at the thoughts of death and the judgment, fasting, praying, and giving alms to the poor; but soon after we were surprised to behold her with her proud associates exhibiting their haughty spirit in the council-chamber of the nation.

We have also marked the change which alone can enable the feet to walk securely and peacefully in the narrow path. We have seen her penitence, her faith in Christ, and the first fruits of a new life. We shall now present to the reader some of the influences by which her

early Christian experience was sustained and expanded. We shall introduce some of the distinguished men who were blessed as important instruments of good to her at this period.

Lady Huntingdon's personal acquaintance with John and Charles Wesley commenced soon after her recovery from the sickness during which God spoke peace to her soul. She then sent for them, hearing they were preaching in the vicinity, and declared what great things God had done for her.

They frequently, from that time, preached at Donnington Park, and maintained the most cordial Christian intimacy, by frequent interviews and occasional exchange of letters. The acquaintance was evidently highly esteemed by each. There is no evidence that at this time their doctrinal views differed. She looked up to them as her teachers in religious experience, and they referred to her enlightened judgment perplexing questions of practical duty. Having just emerged from a long night of erroneous seeking after salvation, their minds rejoiced

exceedingly in the liberty of the people of God. But the work which God's providence was imposing upon them on every side, astonished even themselves. They therefore needed, and sought by every Christian means, wisdom to direct.

As the early history of the Wesleys is so much connected with that of Lady Huntingdon, it will be necessary to refer to it briefly. At the time of the countess's conversion, the Wesleys and Whitefield were meeting with the Moravians at Fetter Lane, London. With that society she immediately became connected, and regularly attended its meetings. Whitefield was preaching in the city churches, and exciting the attention of thousands. His word was with such power that the worldly and formal were offended at him, and he was forbidden the use of the churches. Then commenced that wonderful movement in the reformation of his times, the practice of field preaching. The Wesleys followed Whitefield in this means of preaching Christ to the poor. The new field, so



WHITEFIELD PREACHING.



white for the harvest, made occasion for more laborers. Whitefield had suggested, and commenced providing, a school for the children of the poor of Kingswood and Bristol. Wesley had completed the provision, by great exertions and greater personal sacrifices, established the school, and placed Mr. John Cennick over it as tutor.

While these pioneers were thus extending their influence, the Society at Fetter Lane was unhappily distracted by those who had crept in unawares, and, as professed teachers of higher Christian attainments, had destroyed the faith of some. They taught that holiness was received by refraining from the use of all means. Hence they disparaged all the ordinances. They inveighed against preaching and prayer especially. Their constant cry was, "*Be still.*" They took away a part of God's word which said, "Work out your salvation," and said only, "It is God that worketh in you." After many efforts to correct these errors, the Wesleys, Whitefield, Lady Huntingdon, and eighteen or

nineteen others, withdrew from the society at Fetter Lane. Less than a year previous to this event, John Wesley had purchased and opened for religious meetings, the *Foundry*, an uncouth building at Moorfields, not far from Fetter Lane. Here he and his co-laborers preached the gospel with great success, much people being added unto the Lord. Lady Huntingdon was often present, receiving instruction, and privately laboring with the young converts.

The frequent absence of Mr. Wesley from the society at the Foundry, made it necessary to leave some pious, judicious member in charge of its affairs. Thomas Maxfield was selected for this purpose. He was a man of superior natural abilities, and deep piety. His prayers in the social meetings and his exhortations pleased and profited the society. Lady Huntingdon, witnessing these labors, encouraged him to attempt an exposition of portions of the Scriptures. He did so with great freedom and eloquence. Surprised at his success, she wrote to Wesley the following letter:

“I never mentioned to you that I have seen Maxfield. He is one of the greatest instances of God’s peculiar favor that I know. He is raised from the stones to sit among the princes of his people. He is my astonishment! How is God’s power shown in weakness! You can have no idea what an attachment I have to him. He is highly favored of the Lord. The first time I made him expound, expecting but little from him, I sat over against him. I thought, what a power of God must be with him to make *me* give attention to him. But before he had gone over one fifth part, any one, to have seen me, would have thought I had been made of wood or stone; so quite immovable I both felt and looked. His power in prayer is extraordinary. To deal plainly, I could either talk or write for an hour about him.”

Maxfield, being thus placed before the people as a teacher, and multitudes flocking to hear his expositions, soon began to preach in a more formal manner. His word was owned

of God. Genuine conversions, the seals of a true gospel minister, were given him. Wesley's Church prejudices were shocked when he heard that a *layman* had thus assumed to be a preacher. He hastened from Bristol to London to stop the startling innovation. He was met at the Foundry by his revered mother, who remarked that he had better hear Maxfield before he laid his prohibitory authority upon him; for she had heard him, and before his strains of evangelical truth her long-cherished prejudices had given way.

John wisely followed his mother's advice; heard, and was convinced that God had chosen the weak things of this world to confound the mighty; and seeing that he had appointed this uneducated, unordained man to call sinners, by preaching, to repentance, he dared not forbid him.

After Maxfield had thus labored, as Wesley's "helper," for several years, he was ordained by his recommendation. The bishop about to lay his hand upon him remarked: "Sir, I ordain

you to assist that good man, John Wesley, that he may not work himself to death."

Mr. Maxfield, subsequently adopting the Calvinistic doctrine, separated from Wesley's connection. He ministered for some time in a large chapel in Princes-street, London, near Moorfields. He died suddenly, in the midst of his years and usefulness, of a paralytic stroke.

A still more extraordinary character was at this time raised up, as the countess expresses it, "from among the stones to sit with princes." We refer to John Nelson. As he was emphatically one of our lady's early Methodist friends, and was largely indebted to her kindness, we must notice, in a general manner, his wonderful career.

He was a native of Birstal, near Leeds. Being in London, at work on the Somerset House, as a mechanic, he heard Wesley preach at Moorfields. He says: "As soon as he got upon the stand, he stroked back his hair, and turned his face toward where I stood, and, I thought, fixed his eyes on me. His

countenance struck such an awful dread upon me, before I heard him speak, that it made my heart beat like the pendulum of a clock. When he did speak I thought his whole discourse was aimed at me."

After his conversion, which followed immediately, he left his business, under a sense of duty to the spiritual good of his neighbors at home, and returned to Birstal. The simple rehearsal to them of his inward change, excited great attention. Some mocked and opposed, but others became, first interested, then awakened and converted. Multitudes gathered about him, and begged to know more about these strange things. John became immediately the center of a religious excitement which spread for many miles around. He was astonished and perplexed at his position. He sent for Mr. Wesley to strengthen and direct him. When Mr. Wesley came, and saw how God was working, he readily, as in Maxfield's case, gave him his countenance to preach and form societies.

Mr. Ingham, whose immediate field of labor included the vicinity of Birstal, visited him, and, in the presence of several religious friends, closely questioned him concerning his religious experience and knowledge of religious things. Being well satisfied with his answers, he said to Nelson, in the presence of the company: "John, God hath given you great honor, in that he hath made use of you to call sinners to repentance; and I desire you to exhort in all my societies as often as you can."

About this time Lady Huntingdon, having heard of Nelson's wonderful experience, visited his neighborhood, to see and hear him. After Mr. Ingham had preached to a congregation of many thousands, Nelson spoke for a half hour. When he had closed the countess seized him by the hand, and with much emotion exclaimed: "John, God hath called you to put your hand to the plow. Great will be your punishment if you dare to look back. He that called you is mighty to save. Fear not; press forward; *he will bless your testimony.*"

Thus encouraged, John Nelson commenced preaching, to the astonishment of all who heard him, and the salvation of many. We must not follow his history, but will only add, that having been pressed for a soldier, in consequence of his faithful preaching, and having suffered much, he was relieved by Lady Huntingdon's influence. She applied to many in authority in his behalf, and finally to the Earl of Sunderland, then famous as a successful general, and afterward titled Duke of Marlborough. The earl ordered Nelson to be set at liberty, and sent him the glad tidings through Charles Wesley.

Having thus committed herself in favor of lay preaching, her ladyship soon had an opportunity to extend her approbation to one much nearer home.

There was among the servants of Lord Huntingdon a man named Daniel Taylor. He was possessed of considerable natural ability and soundness of judgment, and had received a tolerable education. He was among the first

subjects of God's converting grace, under Methodist preaching. His deep interest in the salvation of his fellow-servants, led the countess to encourage him to extend his labors. He began, in the hamlets of the poor, in the vicinity of Donnington Park, to preach Christ. As in the other cases of lay preaching, his labors produced a wonderful effect. His patroness, who without religion would have regarded the instruction of a servant with contempt, sat under his ministrations with amazement and delight. In his word was the "tongue of fire," turning men to God.

From the cottages of Donnington Park, Taylor extended his itinerating to the villages and towns to a considerable distance. Thousands flocked to hear the word of life.

At Ratby, a village near Leicester, there was a man named Samuel Deacon, mowing in his field. Hearing that Taylor, whose fame had reached his ears, was to preach that day in the streets of Ratby, he laid down his scythe and went to hear him. The word spoken

proved the power of God unto his salvation, and he, too, soon began to preach. A Church was gathered as the fruit of Mr. Deacon's labors at Barton Fabis, in Leicestershire, over which he presided as pastor fifty-two years. A *Connection* of Christian professors was formed of such as came under his influence, which embraced, in subsequent years, one hundred and twenty Churches and 11,000 members.

Taylor continued to push his labors into new and wider fields, co-operating with Ingham and Wesley, and finally became a member of the Connection of the latter.

While God was thus raising up humble friends and co-laborers, the Wesleys, from difference of doctrinal views, which began soon to be apparent, were less intimate with Lady Huntingdon. Yet it was long before they ceased to labor together in Christian fellowship. Charles Wesley had, soon after the organization of the society at the Foundry, leaned, for a short time only, to the *quietism* of the Moravians, though he had so firmly opposed

that error at Fetter Lane. Lady Huntingdon's attachment to him was very great, and she used the freedom of an intimate friend, and was blessed as an important instrument in securing his frank and full renunciation of it.

The following letters will not only show the value of her labors in opposing the Moravian error of "*stillness*," but show the high standard of personal piety she had proposed to herself, and the confidence existing between her and John Wesley, to whom they are addressed. They are dated about a year after the commencement of the meeting at the Foundry, namely, near the beginning of the year 1742.

"Wisdom is justified of her children. Your answer to the former part of mine has quite silenced me on that subject. But I believe your brother's journal will clear up my meaning to you, for I should labor very much to have as few snares in his way as possible. Since you left us the *still ones* are not without their attacks. I fear much more for him than for myself, as the conquest of the one would be

nothing to that of the other. They have, by one of their agents, reviled me very much, but I have taken no sort of notice, as if I had never heard it. I comfort myself very much that you will approve a step your brother and I have taken with respect to them; no less than his declaring open war with them. He seemed under some difficulty about it at first, till he had free liberty given him to use my name as the instrument in God's hand that had delivered him from them. I rejoiced much at it, hoping that it might be a means of working my deliverance from them. I have desired him to inclose to them yours on Christian Perfection. The doctrine herein contained I hope to live and die by; it is absolutely the most complete thing I know. God has helped your infirmities. His Spirit was with you of a truth." . . .

The reader will not fail to be interested in the countess's unqualified approval of Mr. Wesley's sentiments on Christian Perfection, expressed in the above letter. The publication referred to was undoubtedly his sermon on

that subject, which contained a fair statement of what was subsequently a cause of so much complaint against him. It is the substance of what has ever been the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification.

The following letter contains more expressions of approval of the same doctrine.

“I think there is not one thing in the journal that ought to be omitted. The manner you speak of yourself cannot be mended, supposing you have done justice to the grace you have received. We never forget to recommend you, and all your undertakings, at the throne of grace; and as long as you follow the Lord Jesus in simplicity and godly sincerity, I hope to be the happy friend that shall live and die by you, if the Lord permit. May you be his peculiar charge now, henceforth, and forever.

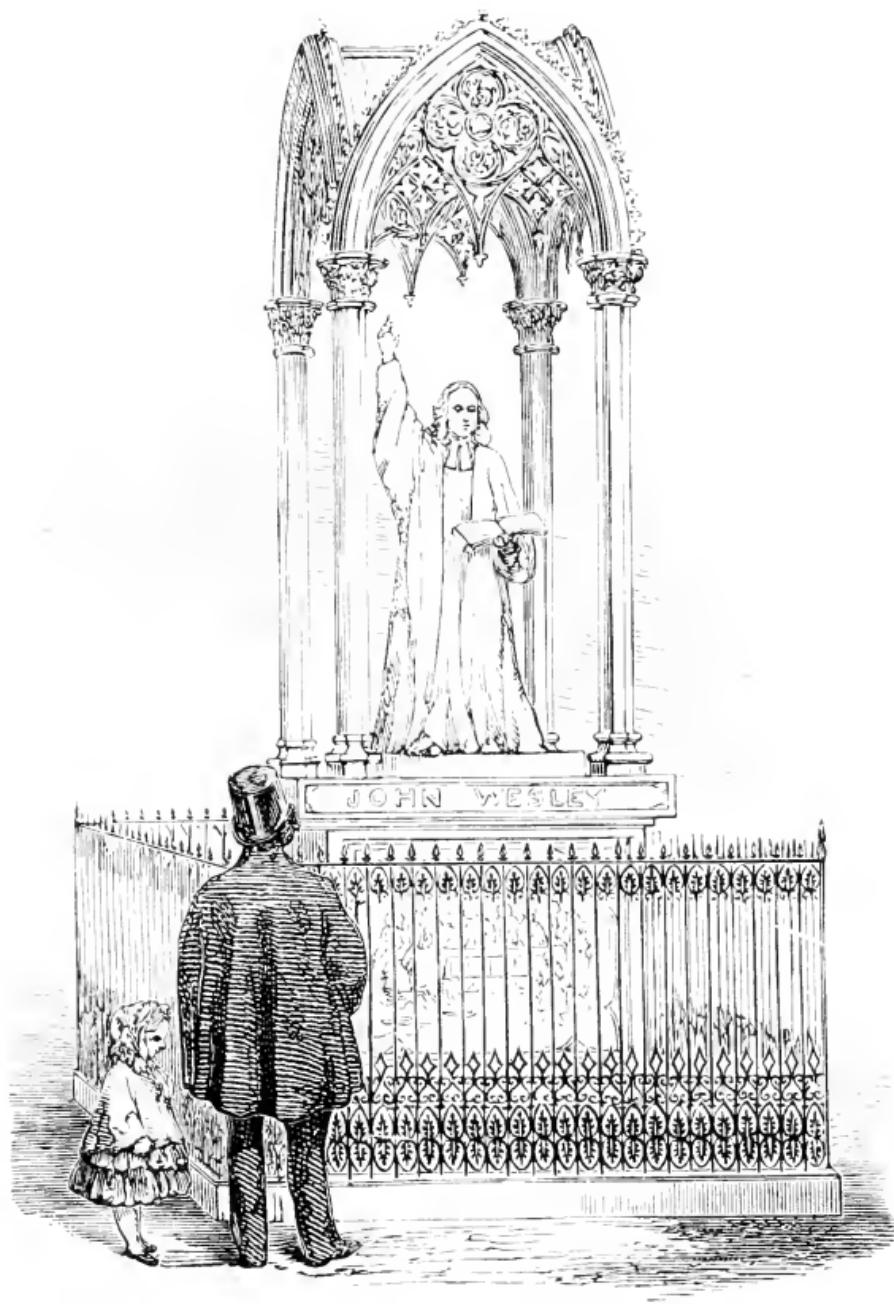
“My whole heart has not one single grain, this moment, of thirst after approbation. I feel alone with God; he fills the whole void. I see all mortals under my feet. I have not one wish, one will, one desire, but in him. He

hath set my feet in a large room. I have wondered and stood amazed that God should make a conquest of all within me by love. Others may be conquered by less gifts and graces, but what must that evil heart be, that nothing but the love of God can conquer? I am brought to less than nothing. I am broken to pieces like the potter's vessel. O, may you thus be subject; may these tears be your meat day and night. I long to leap into the flames to get rid of my sinful flesh, and that every atom of these ashes might be separate, that neither time, place, nor person should stay God's Spirit.

“Fear not, be strong, and he will establish you. Adieu. Your most faithful friend,

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

Speaking of Mr. Wesley's intimacy with the countess at the date of these letters, her biographer says: “At this period Mr. Wesley's visits to Donnington Park were very frequent, Lady Huntingdon having a very sincere esteem for him, and they were much united in sentiments of a theological nature. Easy and affable in





his demeanor, he accommodated himself to every society, and showed how happily the most finished courtesy may be blended with the most perfect piety. In his conversation we might be at a loss which to admire most, his fine classical taste, his extensive knowledge of men and things, or his overflowing goodness of heart. While the grave and the serious were charmed with his wisdom, his sportive sallies of innocent mirth delighted even the young and thoughtless; and both saw in his uninterrupted cheerfulness, the excellence of true religion."

The same spirit in Lady Huntingdon which led her to seek the friendship and Christian counsel of the Wesleys, gave her a deep interest, from the day of her conversion, in the public ministrations of their fellow-laborer, George Whitefield. Her personal acquaintance with him began several years later. He preached frequently at her residence, and by the attraction of his unequaled eloquence, and the personal solicitations of her ladyship, the most

distinguished of the English nobility were brought under the influence of his ministry.

Speaking of one of these services, Lady Huntingdon writes to a friend : "It was a time of refreshing from the presence of our God. Several of our little circle have been wonderfully filled with the love of God, and have had joy unspeakable and full of glory. Lady Frances is rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God. It is impossible to conceive of a more real happiness than she enjoys. Dear Mr. Whitefield's sermons and exhortations were close, searching, experimental, awful, and awakening. Surely God was with him. He appeared to speak of heavenly and divine things as awful realities. Many of us could witness to the truth of what he uttered, by finding that which our hearts discovered and read to us. His discourses in the neighboring churches were attended with power from on high, and the kingdom of darkness trembled before the Gospel of Christ."

Mr. Whitefield's letters to the countess may appear to the reader to be flattering and sub-

servient; and it may be to him a poor apology that this mode of address was customary then, if not now, for those in Whitefield's relations to the nobility. It is certain, however, that they were the honest expressions of Whitfield's impassioned nature, and that he could, and did, when occasion required, utter humbling truths to the most exalted.

Lady Huntingdon having invited him to visit her, and preach at the mansion she was then occupying at Chelsea, saying that several of the nobility desired to hear him, he sent the following answer:

“HONORED MADAM,—I received your ladyship's letter last night, and write this to inform you that I am quite willing to comply with your invitation. As I am to preach, God willing, at St. Bartholomew's on Wednesday evening, I will wait upon you the next morning, and spend the whole day at Chelsea. Blessed be God, that the rich and great begin to have hearing ears. Surely your ladyship and Madam Edwin are only the first-fruits from among

them. May you increase and multiply. I believe you will. How wonderfully does our Redeemer deal with souls. If they will hear the Gospel only under a ceiled roof, ministers shall be sent to them there. If only in a church or a field, they shall have it there.

“A word in the lesson, when I was last at your ladyship’s, struck me: ‘Paul preached privately to those that were of *reputation*.’ This must be the way, I presume, of dealing with the nobility who know not the Lord. O that I may be enabled, when called to preach to any of them, so to preach as to win their souls to the blessed Jesus! I know you will pray that it may be so. As to my poor prayers, such as they are, your ladyship hath them every day. That the blessed Jesus may make you happily instrumental in bringing many of the noble and mighty to the saving knowledge of his Eternal Self, and water your own soul every moment, is the continued request, honored madam, of your ladyship’s most obliged, obedient, humble servant, G. WHITEFIELD.”

Of this visit he writes: "My hands have been full of work, and I have been among great company. I preached twice at Lady Huntingdon's, to several of the nobility. In the morning the Earl of Chesterfield was present; in the evening the Lord Bolingbroke. All behaved quite well, and were in some degree affected. Lord Chesterfield thanked me, and said, 'Sir, I will not tell you what I shall tell others, how I approve of you.' He conversed with me freely afterward. Lord Bolingbroke was much moved, and desired I would come and see him the next morning. I did, and his lordship behaved with great candor and frankness. All accepted of my sermons, and seem not only surprised, but pleased. Thus the world turns round. 'In all time of my wealth, good Lord deliver me.'"

In answer to another invitation from Lady Huntingdon, to preach in her house, he writes: "Ever since reading your ladyship's condescending letter, my soul has been overpowered with His presence who is all in all. As there seems to be a door open for the nobility to hear

the Gospel, I will defer my journey, and, God willing, preach at your ladyship's on Tuesday. On Monday morning, from nine to near eleven, I will be at your ladyship's, and wait to know your order concerning Tuesday. O that God may be with me, and make me humble! I am ashamed to think you will admit me under your roof; much more am I amazed that the Lord Jesus will make use of such a creature as I am. Under a sense of this I write to you now. It is late, and my poor body calls for rest. But as I am to preach *four* times to-morrow, I thought it my duty to send these few lines to-night. Quite astonished at your ladyship's condescension, and the unremitting, superabounding grace and goodness of Him who has loved me and given himself for me, I subscribe myself, honoured madam, your ladyship's most obliged, obedient, humble, and willing servant,

“ G. WHITEFIELD.”

While the effects of his preaching to the nobility appeared, in some cases, in their attention to religious things, in others it was seen in their

scoffings. To some it was a savor of life, and to others of death. The celebrated statesman, Horace Walpole, sneered at the power of the Gospel in high places. In writing to a distant friend, he warns him to be prepared for the influence of Methodism when he shall return to England, because some of the noblest of his friends had yielded to its power. After mentioning several great names, some of whom had been notoriously wicked, he says: "The Methodists love your big sinners, as proper subjects to work upon; and, indeed, they have a plentiful harvest."

Whitefield's preaching and private labors, while under the countess's roof, were blessed, not only to the great, but to the humble. The following anecdote will show the different effect, in one case, of the same word, upon these opposite classes.

Lady Huntingdon had invited some of the nobility to her drawing-room on one Sunday evening, to hear her eloquent friend. They, having heard him, called on her ladyship on

Monday morning, and in the course of their remarks on his sermon said: "O my lady, of all the preachers we ever heard, he is the most strange and unaccountable. Among other preposterous things (would your ladyship believe it?) he declared that Jesus Christ was so willing to receive sinners, that he did not object to receive even *the devil's castaways!* Now, my lady, did you ever hear of such a thing since you were born?"

Lady Huntingdon acknowledged that the phrase was unusual. She remarked, that as Whitefield was in the parlor, and could himself best explain its meaning and defend its use, she would call him.

Whitefield being called, was told the charge which the ladies preferred against him. He acknowledged he had used the expression, and replied that an incident which had just occurred would be both an illustration of its meaning and a defense of its utterance. A poor woman, he said, had a few moments since begged to see him. She was bowed down with age and

infirmities. She requested modestly the privilege of declaring the fact that God had pardoned her sins, and the means by which he had conferred so great a blessing. She said, that in passing a chapel where Whitefield was preaching, she heard him exclaim, with strong emotion, "Christ Jesus receives even the devil's castaways." "And then he will receive me," exclaimed the aged sinner, "for I am one. I have spent all my strength, my substance, and nearly all my days in the devil's service, and now he has cast me off to suffer the want of everything that can comfort me."

And the old lady sought and found that Christ would receive her.

"Now," continued Whitefield, "you see it is true; and God has sealed its declaration with his approval, in making it to one soul, at least, a word in season."

The noble cavilers were silenced, and Lady Huntingdon sought out and instructed more fully in divine things, *the accepted castaway*.

The following letter from Whitefield to the

Countess Delitz will further exhibit the religious character of Lady Huntingdon's household.

“Good Lady Huntingdon goes on acting the part of a mother in Israel, more and more. For a day or two she has had five clergymen under her roof, which makes her ladyship look like a *good archbishop*, with his chaplains around him. Her house is a *Bethel*. To us in the ministry it looks like a college. We have the sacrament every morning, heavenly conversation all day, and preach at night. This is to *live at court* indeed!”

The mutual affection of John Wesley and Mr. Whitefield, it is well known, was “obscured by a cloud for a season,” by the rise of the Calvinistic controversy. We cannot ascertain that Lady Huntingdon was at this time acquainted with Whitefield. Soon after we find him at her house, preaching to her distinguished friends. The Wesleys continued friendly relations with Lady Huntingdon after these disputes commenced, but with less cordiality and

mutual pleasure. Lady Huntingdon, however, still desired the former union of feeling; for about eight years after, when the leaders of Methodism were all in London, she wrote to each of them, to secure a more frequent co-operation in their labor. Strong affection for each other they certainly had continued to entertain, and had in various ways expressed. They responded cordially to her suggestions, and Wesley preached in Whitefield's Tabernacle while the latter assisted in the service, and the next day Whitefield officiated at the Foundry, assisted in the exercises by Wesley. In view of these expressions of Christian love, Lady Huntingdon writes: "Thanks be to God for the love and unanimity which have been displayed on this happy occasion. May the God of peace and harmony unite us all in a bond of affection! In forbearance toward each other, may we imitate his blessed disciples, so that all who take knowledge of us may say, 'See how these Christians love one another.'"

## CHAPTER IV.

## LADY HUNTINGDON IN AFFLICITION.

IN the preceding chapter we have endeavored to present a clear though brief account of the early Christian associates of Lady Huntingdon. From such men as the Wesleys and Whitefield, and from even such extraordinary "helpers" as Maxfield and Nelson, she received influences which were no unimportant items in strengthening and directing her Christian character.

We shall endeavor, in this chapter, to present another class of influences, by which God made her what she was, and fitted her for the great work in the church which she performed. We refer to the personal and family afflictions through which she was called to pass, and the severe conflict that her public position imposed upon her. These constituted a discipline trying

indeed, but to which she owed much of her efficiency and success.

We have seen that the death of a child first fully awakened to religious truth, the youthful Selina. Again, when personally afflicted and brought near to the grave, she was more clearly enlightened concerning her sinfulness and its remedy, and made acquainted with the peace of the believer. How much, through grace, this new spiritual life was sustained and quickened by “the rod,” the following statements will enable the reader to judge.

In the commencement of 1743, five years subsequent to her conversion, Lady Huntingdon was rejoicing amid her distinguished social blessings; a husband, though not converted, friendly to, and in some respects a helper of her religious life; four sons, the youngest of whom was already exchanging childhood for youth, and two daughters verging into womanhood. Into the midst of this happy family circle came that *terrible* form of disease, the small-pox. The glowing countenance of

Ferdinand, aged eleven, was first disfigured, and his manly form laid low. George, aged thirteen, immediately followed him to the grave. None but parents who have thus suffered, know how desolate then were the decorated rooms and splendid saloons of Donnington Park to Lord and Lady Huntingdon. The former was sustained, alas! only by philosophy, but the latter, by a strengthening Christian faith.

But this affliction, severe as it was, was only preparatory to one still more painful. In less than two years after, Lord Huntingdon was arrested by death, in the full vigor of manhood, being but forty-nine years old, and while surrounded by life's coveted attractions, wealth, honor, and power. He died of apoplexy, while tarrying at his house in Downing-street, Westminster.

From the shock of these sudden and repeated bereavements Lady Huntingdon never recovered her former elasticity of spirits. She placed a bust of herself upon the tomb of her

husband, seeming thus to declare that she still lingered in affection around the place of his burial. If before this she had any remaining affection for the worldly display surrounding her position, she renounced it now. During the six months following her husband's death, she remained in entire privacy at Donnington Park.

From the death of Lord Huntingdon until her son became of age, she had the sole management of the family estates. Instead of sitting down in unavailing griefs, or yielding herself up to sinful repinings, she began immediately so to use her new responsibilities as to increase her usefulness. When called to resign this position to her eldest son, the young Lord Huntingdon, she removed with her family from Donnington Park to London, and took up her residence in Park-street.

About the time of these inroads by death upon her family, Lady Huntingdon was seriously indisposed. And again, after her removal from the Huntingdon mansion, she was seized

with a violent disease, and her friends became alarmed for her. An express was sent for Whitefield, who hastened by post to her sick chamber. Being reluctant to employ medical aid, she at last yielded to the solicitations of her friends, and sent for a Dr. Stonehouse, a family acquaintance. This celebrated man was at this time infidel in his principles. As the physician of the countess, he came, more than ever, within her influence and the influence of the pious persons of her acquaintance. The consequence was, that his skepticism was first weakened, and finally exchanged for an evangelical faith in Christ. He became subsequently an eminent preacher of the Gospel. Thus God wrought, indirectly, the good of others by her illness.

Upon herself these personal chastenings were highly beneficial. She thus expresses herself while suffering under them: “How many sore trials has my Saviour showed me, yet in the midst of them his comforts have refreshed my soul. Truly I can say, he is

‘The spring of all my joys,  
The life of my delights ;  
The glory of my brightest days,  
The comfort of my nights.’

“I feel perfectly resigned to suffer all my God shall think fit to lay upon me ; for I am forcibly persuaded he will give strength according to my day, and fully perfect what concerns me. When ready to be discouraged by outward and inward trials, he always appears for my support. Never did I feel so much reconciled to the cross. When it ceases to be *necessary*, I shall suffer no more. O, what cause have I to trust in him for all things, when he has so clearly revealed his dear Son in me ! In moments of secret anguish he never permits me to lose sight of a *reconciled* God, or of my union to the Lord Jesus Christ.”

To a valued friend, who had written a letter of condolence concerning her late sickness, she writes, after a partial recovery :

“I have this day received a fresh mark of your unwearied pains and thoughts about me.

Alas! did you know the continual sighs and tears I am offering through the weakness and unprofitableness of my life, they would speak cruel and bitter answers to the tender care of all my dear friends. I often look to that bed which promises me a refuge from an evil world, and from a yet more evil heart; but how does it bound, as a roe or a hind over the muntains, when that all-transporting view presents itself! presents, O glorious! an eternity of joy, to follow this glad release from time; everlasting triumphs sounding throughout the angelic thrones to welcome my arrival. Such love and pity dwell in heaven, and only there, for misery and poverty like mine. What liberty to delight in that which is most excellent! How enlarged those faculties which can take in celestial purity, and, by sweet attraction, engage and eternally maintain a union with it! Thus do I look on death. He is called a monster, a king of terrors, but as a Gabriel's salutation shall my soul meet him. He can bring no other message to the redeemed in Christ but, 'Hail, thou art

highly favored of the Lord; and though it is true so great a stranger can surprise for a little, yet his smiles of victory will clear even the grievances of flesh and blood, and make the grave appear a consecrated dormitory for sweet repose. O glorious Immanuel, how, how do I long for that immortal voice to praise thee with; and till ~~wen~~, that mortal one which may sound through earth thy love to man!"

We should not clearly exhibit the manner by which God bore the countess through the discipline of his providence, if we did not glance at the ready and stirring words of cheer, uttered by her pious co-laborers in the cause of Christ. The gifted, but eccentric Berridge, whom we shall introduce more formally to the reader by-and-by, writes to her concerning her sickness, with a dashing pen, but a full, warm, and sincere heart.

"Mrs. Bateman acquaints me that your ladyship has been ill of a fever, but is now better. I was glad to hear of both. Nothing expels undue grief of mind like bodily correction.

Nothing makes the child leave crying like the rod; at least I find it so by experience. However, I durst not send such consolation to many Christians, because they are not able to see the truth, or bear the weight of it. I saw your heart was sorely pained, and I pitied you, but durst not soothe you; for soothing, though it eases grief for a moment, only makes Lady Self grow more burdensome, and occasions more tears in the end. A little whipping from your Father will dry up your tears much sooner than a thousand pretty lullabies from your brethren. And now I hope you will be well soon."

In a characteristic strain of fervent piety is the letter, on a like occasion, of Fletcher of Madeley :

“The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who tried Israel, and led them through many a wandering to the good land, that he might do them more good in their latter end, this faithful God has met with you; a rod is in his hand, but that hand bears so *deep* a print of love, that the design of his visitation cannot be mis-

taken. Nor does it come without the supporting staff; He kills to make alive; He wounds to heal; He afflicts to comfort, and to do it more deeply and effectually. My hearty prayer for your ladyship is, that you may drink the cup the Lord holds out to you, as a new token of his unchangeable love; I call it unchangeable, because it is really so in its nature, though the appearances of it greatly vary, for the trial of faith. . . . I have often heard your ladyship speak admirably upon knowing Christ and the power of his resurrection, and the *fellowship of his sufferings*. The Lord will have you improve in that heavenly knowledge, therefore he gives you so long a lesson at this time. The lesson is hard, I grant, but the Master is *so loving*, the science so noble, and the scholar so used to severe exercises, that it is no wonder you are placed in this highest form. No cross, no crown! The heavier the cross, the brighter the crown!"

Her ladyship needed not only these exercises in the school of affliction, but the enrap-

turing anticipations of her eternal glory, expressed in her own letter, as well as the sympathies of mature Christians, to fit her for the full cup of affliction, placed to her lips in later years.

In 1757 her youngest son, the Hon. Henry Hastings, was removed by death. On this occasion Whitefield wrote, in the fullness of his Christian sympathies, the lines: “Who but the Redeemer can possibly describe the yearnings of a tender parent’s heart? Surely your ladyship is called to cut off a right hand, and pluck out a right eye; but it is the Lord, let him do what seemeth to him good! This has often been the case with the best of people, and the greatest favorites of Heaven; but none know the bitterness of such a cup but those who are called to drink it. If not sweetened with a sense of the love and mercy of God in Christ, who could abide it? What pruning do these luxuriant branches require in order to preserve the fruit, and the delicacy of the vine. Blessed be God that there is a time coming when these dignified, mysterious providences shall be explained.”

We are not informed whether this young lord had the influence of the grace of the Gospel, which so adorned his mother. But the bereavement which followed a few years later was relieved by the religious experience of the departed. Lady Selina, youngest surviving child of the Countess Huntingdon, died May 12, 1763, aged 26. Her personal beauty, superior accomplishments, unusual natural abilities, and great amiability, had made her the favorite of her circle of friends. She seems to have added to these attractions, the adorning of a genuine Christian character. Her pious mother might well feel, that in such a child she possessed the greatest of earthly treasures. She received great solace, while pressed with the cares of her public station, (often bitterly opposed and shamefully misrepresented,) in the companionship of her much beloved Selina. This interest in her daughter was increased, if possible, by the fact that she was honored with the confidence of the queen, and that her hand had been sought in marriage by one whom the

mother approved as suited to her position, and fitted to make her happy and useful. The preparations for the nuptial ceremony gave way to attentions due to a sick chamber. If the life of this interesting young woman was lovely, her sickness and death were eminently instructive. Light from heaven, more than illuminating the gloom of the dark providence that called her thus early away, shone upon the last hours of her earthly life. Her mother has left the following record of this touching scene:

“It hath pleased our dear God and only Saviour to take from me my dearest, my altogether lovely child and daughter, Lady Selina Hastings, the desire of my eyes and continual pleasure of my heart. On the 26th of April she was taken sick of a fever, which lasted obstinate until the 17th day from the time it began. On her going to bed she said she should never rise from it more; and from all that she said to me during her illness it was evident that she continued satisfied she should

not live. She said she did not *begin* to think about death *then*, and that she had no desire to live; ‘therefore, my dear mother, why not now? The Lord can make me ready for himself in a moment; and if I live longer I may not be better prepared. I am a poor creature; I can do nothing of myself; I only hope you will be supported.’

“She often desired me to pray by her, and with great earnestness accompanied me. At one time she called me and said: ‘My dear mother, come and lie down by me, and let my heart be laid close to yours, and then I shall rest.’ . . . During the last four days these sentences at times fell from her: ‘Jesus, teach me! Jesus, wash me, cleanse me, and purify me!’ Lying quiet she said, ‘Two angels are beckoning me, and I must go!’ Another time she said, ‘I am happy as my heart can desire to be.’ The day before her death I came to her and asked her if she knew me. She answered, ‘My dearest mother.’ I then asked her if her heart was happy. She replied, ‘I

now well understand you,' and raising her head from the pillow, added, 'I am happy, *very, very* happy;' and then put out her lips to kiss me. . . . She often said, to be resigned to the will of God was all, and she had no hope of salvation but in the mercy of Jesus Christ alone. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

It is instructive to notice, in the foregoing narrative, that the child of wealth, and almost royal honors, in becoming a child of God, has the same simple faith, the same humility, the same holy triumph, as well as the same language of love and hope, as the lowliest and most obscure disciple of Christ. When we become "new creatures," we become "one in Christ."

Lady Huntingdon's affliction called forth the sympathy of many friends. Letters of condolence were sent from the noble, as well as from the clergy. The humble poor, also, claimed the privilege of lifting up a prayer for her, for she had never passed by them in their sorrows.

Fletcher's letter evidences his love for his friend, and his more abounding love for Him who had afflicted. He says:

“Blessed be God for giving us the unspeakable satisfaction to see Lady Selina safely landed, and out of the reach of vanity. This is mercy rejoicing over judgment, of a truth. This is an answer to the blood of Jesus and prayers. This an earnest of what my Lord will do for my lady in his time.

“Come, my lady, let us travel on, sticking close to our heavenly Guide; let us keep a hold of the hem of his garment, by firmly believing the arms of his wise providence and everlasting love are underneath us. Let us hasten to our friends in light; and while we thus stand still we shall see the salvation, the *great* salvation of our God. He that cometh will come, and will not tarry; even so, come quickly, and let us all be lost together in Thy love and praise.”

Thus comforted by God's people, and sustained by the consolation of religion, Lady

Huntingdon went forth from the house of mourning, to *do* with cheerfulness the will of God, which she had learned to *suffer* with confidence and hope.

Death is not the greatest enemy of the happiness of the family circle. There is an anguish in a parent's breast, deeper than that which the child dying in the hope of a better life produces. *That* anguish Lady Huntingdon was called to suffer. Her son, who succeeded to his father's titles and estates, had many attractive qualities. His talents had secured him office and honors near to the king's person. His learning was superior to that of his compeers. His polite accomplishments had been carefully studied in the highest circles at home, and amid the advantages of extensive travel abroad. But he was an infidel. Lord Chesterfield, the plausible and flattering, but mean and wicked Chesterfield, had assumed over him the care of a father, and the adopted son too well learned his unbelief.

Lord Bolingbroke too, it will be remembered,

the witty, talented, and skeptical Bolingbroke, was the friend of his father, and a visitor at his mother's residences; and became, unhappily, the son's teacher in irreligion. Such was young Lord Huntingdon, so far as we have any account of him. Whether his mother's example and prayers won him to Christ at last, eternity alone must reveal.

In Elizabeth, her eldest daughter, Lady Huntingdon had not only an affectionate daughter, but a sympathizer in her religious sentiments and experience. She died in 1808, nearly four score years of age. When quite young she was honored by the notice of the sisters of the reigning king. She attracted the attention of the court circles, by her accomplishments and abilities. By her marriage she became the Countess of Moira. Her domestic relations were happy, and highly pleasing to her mother. We shall glance at this young countess again in another relation.

Thus God did not leave Lady Huntingdon

without some outward comfort in her family relations, though bereaved of Selina and afflicted in the irreligion of her son.

We have before spoken of the marriage of Mr. Ingham, the companion of Wesley in Georgia, to the sister of Lord Huntingdon. With Mr. Ingham and his wife, Lady Huntingdon maintained not only a family acquaintance, but a valuable Christian intimacy. They were, indeed, worthy of her confidence. Mr. Ingham was a gentleman of superior personal attractions, a good scholar, and a popular and successful preacher. But through his mistakes and misfortunes, the countess experienced one of the severest afflictions of her life. After he had become the honored head of a “Connection” numbering eighty flourishing societies, he for a season fell into serious doctrinal errors; disputes, alienations, and consequent excommunications followed. The eighty societies dwindled to thirteen, and the mind of Mr. Ingham became depressed, and reason nearly dethroned. Self-crimination and regret took the place of

his former faith and joy. In this time of distress Lady Huntingdon flew to his relief. She had learned sympathy for the suffering by her own sorrows. She urged the sufferer to remember the power of the Gospel he had offered to others, and the fullness of mercy in Christ. Mr. Ingham was soon restored to personal enjoyment and usefulness, and acknowledged the labors of the countess as the means, under God, of his happy restoration. The joy of the countess was increased at this result when, soon after, both Mr. Ingham and his wife were called to the glorious Church above.

We must present one more mournful scene. It occurred in the short interval between the death of the countess's son Henry and her daughter Selina, in 1760. Its painful impression long remained upon her mind, and wrought deeply upon the sensibilities of her family, as well as the community generally. We will spare the reader the revolting details, but will present so much of the affair as to enable him

to appreciate the mental agony which tried the faith and constancy of her ladyship.

Her cousin Laurence, Earl of Ferrers, was a young man of brilliant talents and refined education. High expectations were formed of him by his friends, which were, alas! sadly disappointed. He indulged freely in intoxicating drinks, and became a slave to a violent temper. He first periled the life of his wife, by beating her, and carrying his pistol and other deadly weapons to his sleeping chamber, and threatening in his paroxysm of anger to use them against her. On these accounts the House of Lords granted her a separation from him, and appointed stewards to receive, on her behalf, a part of the income of his estates. At this his lordship was greatly enraged. He deliberately, and under aggravating circumstances, shot an old and faithful household servant who had aided, according to law, in carrying out for Countess Ferrers these provisions. He armed himself against arrest with a dagger, two pistols, and a blunderbuss. He

was, however, arrested, and carried before his peers, the House of Lords, for trial. As if in contempt of his solemn arraignment, he came before the house in the dress in which he appeared at the horse races, and made for such occasions. Every effort to save his life was made by his family and friends, but in vain. He gloried in his shame, and the lords turned from him in disgust. He was condemned to be hanged, and was committed to the Tower. While thus confined, many religious persons became interested to secure his sincere penitence, that he might not go into eternity with the guilt of blood upon his soul. His brother, the Rev. Walter Shirley, Lady Huntingdon, and Whitefield, were unceasing in their attentions to him. He showed a dislike to their visits and religious instruction. He, however, treated his aunt, the countess, with courtesy, and even sent for her, as he said, *for the sake of company*. He, however, expressed a dislike to her efforts to cause him to feel the greatness of his crime, and his solemn nearness to eter-

nity. He would say, in answer to her frequent appeals, "You are enough to provoke anybody." He was angry at being limited in his allowance of wine, and he amused himself with games of chance, until forbidden to do so at the request of the countess.

Whitefield called the attention of his congregation to the lamentable condition of this nobleman, and led the public prayers in his behalf. In allusion to this pious act the sneering statesman, Horace Walpole, said: "That impertinent fellow, Whitefield, told his enthusiasts in his sermons, that my lord's heart was stone." And, indeed, this strong expression seemed too truthful. To the last he maintained the same contempt for his situation, the same impenitence for his crime, and the same lightness toward his religious teachers.

He had planned to take leave of his children (four daughters) on the scaffold, and then to read to them a bitter complaint against his wife's family and the House of Lords. His aunt persuaded him to a different course, and

he took an unfeeling leave of them the day preceding.

This most wretched man went from the Tower, on the morning of his execution, at his own request, and by the strange permission of the authorities, in his own open fashionable carriage, drawn by six horses. He was dressed in his wedding clothes, which were of a light color, and trimmed with silver. Thus trifling with his few remaining moments of time, he was launched into eternity.

Thus was Lady Huntingdon's piety tried. Thus did clouds often gather around her domestic circle, and heavy personal afflictions press upon her, while bearing the burdens of many others, and of many churches. The remembrance of this will help the reader to estimate justly her constancy of faith and love.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE NOBLE FEW.

It would have been strange indeed if one disciplined, as was the countess, in the school of sanctified affliction, and surrounded with such co-laborers as the leaders of Methodism, should have seen no conversions among her friends of the nobility. We have noticed the fact that she let her light shine before them, and enticed them, by her gentle persuasions, to the eloquent preaching in her parlors. This Christian example, and these faithful sermons, bore much fruit.

One of the first subjects of renewing grace among the nobility was Lady Ann Frankland. Being influentially connected and accomplished, she was appointed one of the ladies of honor in the royal family. Her acquaintance with Lady Huntingdon brought her

within the eloquent appeals of the Methodist preachers. She was awakened, and soon experienced the joys of salvation, and fearlessly professed her faith before the world. This she steadily maintained, amid difficulties the most appalling, until, after a few years, she was permitted to enter upon her final reward.

Among the Scotch nobility was a lady whom the Lord had greatly afflicted. Her son, a young man of distinguished abilities, had fallen in the celebrated battle of Culloden. In this bereavement she looked in vain to her wealth, noble rank, and their attendant fashionable pleasures, for consolation. Being without religion, her depression of mind bordered on the loss of reason. Her husband, the Marquis of Lothian, being one of the Scotch peers, returned to the British Parliament; they became acquainted, during their residence in England, with Lady Huntingdon. In her parlors they heard the gospel preached with convicting power. The marquis was the first to inquire what he should do to be saved. To

him, in this state of mind, Whitefield wrote: “You do well, my lord, to *fear* lest your convictions should wear off. Your lordship is in a dangerous situation in the world. Come, then, and lay yourself at the *feet* of Jesus. As to praying in your *family*, I entreat you, my lord, not to neglect it. You are bound to do it. Apply to Christ for strength to overcome your present fears. They are the effect of pride or infidelity, or both.”

The marquis, thus instructed, soon became an humble and bold Christian. In the meantime the marchioness, under the labors of Lady Huntingdon, was learning the way of salvation by faith. Her despondency soon gave way to hope, and her mourning was turned into rejoicing. From this time these persons of rank and influence became examples of humble piety, both while on official business in England, and among their peers in Scotland.

We have had occasion to allude to Lord Bolingbroke’s acquaintance with the Methodist

preachers. Although their words were without fruit in him, his half-brother, Lord St. John, heard and believed. Scarcely had he become confirmed in the faith, when he was required to test its efficacy in death. "He died expressing his firm reliance on the Lord Jesus Christ, renouncing every dependence on his own merits." Thus was his infidel and scoffing brother compelled, in his rejection of religion, to do it against the most sensible evidence of its truthfulness.

In the splendid palace of Twickenham, London, lived Lady Fanny Shirley, aunt to Lady Huntingdon. She had been conspicuous in the court of George the First for her beauty and accomplishments. The most distinguished men of her times were frequent visitors at her residence. Literary men sought her patronage, and the poet Pope, with others, extolled her beauty and talents in fulsome verse. When she renounced the society of the great, and the pleasures of the gay, for a profession of religion, and the real comfort of the

Christian, Horace Walpole turned away from her, exclaiming, “Saint Fanny!”

She witnessed a good confession for many years. She opened her saloons (where so lately the great had gathered in thoughtless pleasure) for the preaching of the Methodists. During frequent attacks of illness, she astonished her physician by her patience, and frequent rejoicings under long-continued and severe pain. “How is this?” he inquired. “I have not found ladies of your rank in this frame of mind.”

“This,” answered a Christian friend, who sat near her, “is the fruit of our holy religion.” Her wealth, her position, and her talents, were all laid at the foot of the cross. In her, Lady Huntingdon found a valuable co-laborer, and the more timid professors among her associates, a guide and defender. Lady Shirley, in her turn, received much encouragement from the frequent presence of Whitefield at her house, and from his cheering letters. He writes, with other stirring words: “I doubt not

but you meet with daily crosses. Persons that stand alone, and in high places, must expect storms. But Jesus is willing and able to uphold you. Thanks be to his great name for giving you such a share of prudence and courage. Without being attached to any party, may you be preserved unspotted from the world, and be a common friend to all."

An intimate friend of Lady Shirley, Lady Chesterfield, became her companion in the joy of personal religion, and in the reproach of Christ. She was the wife of Lord Chesterfield, and the near relative of the king. Her honors, her wealth, and her influence were great. The infidel sentiments of her husband, as well as every circumstance in her position, rendered a life of prayer and a profession of religion a duty requiring more than usual self-denial and cross bearing. But with great faithfulness did she perform it. She retired from the court circles, except when constrained to attend by the urgent wishes of her husband. On one such occasion she received evidence that her

profession of religion, and consequent association with the itinerant preachers, had become known and been ridiculed by her former friends. She wore, on the occasion, a rich but plain dress. The king, forgetting certainly his own self-respect, as well as the courtesy due to his relative and friend, taunted her with having consulted Whitefield in its selection, "for," he remarked, "I hear you have attended on him this year and a half." The injured lady mildly but boldly replied, that his majesty had heard the truth concerning her warm attachment to the preaching and doctrines of Mr. Whitefield.

Her faith was tried in the melancholy death, without hope, of her husband. In relation to his last moments Lady Huntingdon says: "I saw my dear and valued friend a short time before his departure. The blackness of darkness, accompanied by every gloomy horror, thickened most awfully around his dying moments. Dear Lady Chesterfield could not be persuaded to leave his room for an instant.

What unmitigated anguish has she endured. But her confidential communications I am not at liberty to disclose. The curtain has fallen. His immortal part has passed to another state of existence. O ! my soul, come not thou unto his end."

After his death, during the few remaining years of her life, Lady Chesterfield made her splendid rooms the place of frequent preaching, and her house became noted as a house of prayer.

Though opposed by the influence of her husband, Lady Chesterfield was not alone, among her relatives, as a professor of faith in Christ. Her sister, the Countess of Delitz, was among the brightest gems in the number of "noble women." Her residence, too, became a "Bethel," to which the leading Methodist reformers came and preached Christ to the great, and from which they went forth refreshed, to minister to the more lowly but no less attentive hearers of their message.

We have thus seen that the wife and wife's

sister of Lord Chesterfield were consistent and earnest Christians. But these were not all the triumphs of the Gospel in the family of this great but wicked nobleman. His own sister, Lady Gertrude Hotham, was one of the earliest, most decided, and most useful of the pious females of the aristocracy. Her mansion was made a chapel for Whitefield, the Wesleys, Romaine, Howel Harris, and kindred spirits. Her purse assisted to supply the temporal wants of the needy preachers, and helped in defraying the expense of houses of worship erected in places destitute of faithful preaching. We shall detain the reader a few moments, to notice the work of Divine grace in her family. We shall be deeply interested to observe, that, though chastened, she was blessed with a household faith. How powerful must be that Gospel which saves the children of the great from *the flattery, the excitement of worldly pleasures, the allurements of titles and honors, and the pride that wealth begets*, which their position presents, and secures to them the un-

affected simplicity of a Christian character. Yet all this it did for the children of Lady Hotham. Her oldest daughter was the first of the children to become a professed Christian. Soon after the parental home became the place where Whitefield uttered his stirring appeals, she was awakened and converted. Clear evidence of this was afforded in her holy temper, and activity in every good enterprise. She became an object of general regard and love. Her ill health obliged her mother to remove to Bath, hoping that its invigorating atmosphere might be blessed to her recovery. Here she became conspicuous for her rapidly maturing Christian graces. They seemed to glow with a holier radiance amid the irreligion of the place. Quite soon they were submitted to the trials of a dying hour. When the apprehension of her speedy dissolution became general, Mr. Whitefield, to whom she was naturally much attached, was hastened to her chamber. Prayers were offered for her, on the occasion of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, at Lady Fanny

Shirley's and at Lady Huntingdon's. But most solemn, as well as most favored with the Divine presence, was the chamber of Lady Hotham. The beloved daughter lay in the mortal pains of death, her countenance glowing with heavenly animation. Many of the titled were there to behold the superior excellence, above worldly honors, of a title to the inheritance of God's children. Whitefield approached the bedside. In a subdued and gentle tone he repeated the promises of God, and called upon him in prayer for the fullness of his grace. The dying young woman quietly whispered her sense of personal unworthiness, the vanity of the world, and the utter insufficiency of everything out of Christ. But in *him* she was blessed. She *knew* in whom she trusted. With her little remaining strength she embraced her whole family, and, assuring them of her unutterable peace and joy, she fell asleep in Christ.

Soon after the scenes of the sister's dying chamber, the oldest brother, young Lord

Hotham, married, but soon exchanged the relation of husband for that of widower. The sudden death of his young wife was sanctified to him. The convictions he had received from a pious mother and sister, and the holy atmosphere of *home*, matured, under his affliction, into a full purpose to be a Christian. He made a profession of religion, amid the cutting taunts of his uncle and the sneers of the court. He defied all this in the strength of Divine grace, and became “singularly good.” Being nearly of the same age of young Lord Huntingdon, and connected by the ties of distant relationship and boyhood acquaintance, they were very intimate. Hope was entertained, at one time, that Lord Hotham’s piety would prevail in its influence over Lord Huntingdon, and supplant the influence of Chesterfield and Bolingbroke’s skepticism, and that Lady Huntingdon would rejoice in a Christian son. In this hope Whitefield wrote to Lady Shirley: “It will be pleasant to see Sir Charles and the earl striving who shall go fastest to heaven. Your lady-

ship will scorn to be outstripped by any. The Almighty God approves the ambition, and angels look down with pleasure to see the event."

Though the hopes entertained of Huntingdon's conversion were disappointed, Charles continued steadfast. He was advanced to honor in an office near the person of the king; but death removed him, in the midst of his usefulness, soon after his Christian profession. On the very evening that the news of his death in Germany, whither he had gone for his health, reached his mother, she was laid on a dying couch. Having been reading alone, and reclining toward her light, her neck and head-dress took fire, and she was burned sadly. She lingered two weeks in great suffering, but the grace of God triumphed, and lifted her mind above her bereavements, and above bodily pain, and she gloried in the God of her salvation. She called upon her friends to bless God for the accident; to bless God for everything. She dwelt much upon the merits of the atonement. In that alone she rested. Elevating her

voice after a long silence, she exclaimed: "Enough; happy, happy!" and her spirit fled to God.

Such was the experience of the sister of Lord Chesterfield. How strikingly contrasted with the darkness of his death, was the heavenly illumination of her last moments. Be the Christian's death mine.

In the illustrations we have given of the power of saving faith among the great, Lady Huntingdon was made the instrument either of imparting or strengthening that faith. Her drawing-rooms had been the place where the awakening truth was heard. Her example had encouraged attendance upon a ministry which was blessed of God. Her experience in grace, now advanced and established, made her the instructor of the inquirer, and helper of the believer. In the progress of our narrative we shall see that she was still further blessed in saving souls through the chapels she erected and maintained. We allude to this fact now, in order to bring the experience of a

distinguished Scotch nobleman and of his family before the reader.

Lady Huntingdon had just opened a place for an earnest ministry at Bath. Lord Buchan, whose family name was Erskine, had left his native hills, to seek at this famous resort the restoration of fast declining health. While thus seeking a temporal blessing he obtained the pearl of great price. He was attracted to her ladyship's chapel. Whitefield, Wesley, Fletcher, Venn, and others there preached, and hard, indeed, must have been the heart which could remain unmoved under such ministrations. Lord Buchan's conversion was followed by the conversion of his wife. She was distinguished above her compeers for natural powers of mind, and they had been so cultivated that she had become conspicuous in her influence.

The conversion and fellowship with the "Methodists" of such persons, of course excited attention, and caused many remarks among the gentry.

While obtaining evidence of life in Christ,

Lord Buchan was rapidly approaching the grave. A few days before his death, he called Lady Huntingdon to his dying chamber. As soon as he could speak he said: "I have no foundation of hope whatever but in the sacrifice of the Son of God. I have nowhere else to look, and my confidence in him *is as firm as a rock.*" He was filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Calling his children around him, he blessed them in God's name, and added, in strong confidence, "Yea, and they *shall* be blessed." Near his last moments he exclaimed: "Had I strength of body, I would not be ashamed before men and angels, to tell what the Lord Jesus hath done for my soul. Come, Holy Ghost! Come, Holy Ghost! Happy, happy, happy!" Thus died this young convert to the pardoning love of God.

His funeral service, conducted by Whitefield, was attended at the Lady Huntingdon's chapel by a crowd of the great and gay. Many of them from this period dated the beginning of a new life.

In view of this providence Lady Huntingdon writes, with a full heart: “His lordship’s departure was not only happy, but triumphant and glorious. Though arrived at the very summit of assurance, and experiencing much of those rapturous communications which are often made, at the last moments, to the souls of departing saints, he felt abased in the dust on account of his own vileness and utter wretchedness, (by nature,) and his continued cry was, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner!’ I have witnessed the dismissal of many from the burden of mortality, but I have seldom seen an end more satisfactory, more solidly happy, or more triumphant. Thanks, unceasing thanks to Him who hath, in his infinite goodness, blessed the preaching of a house which he hath enabled me to build; and attended the labors of his vile and unprofitable servant with the benediction of his Spirit. Not unto me, not unto me, O my God; but unto *thee*, and unto thy free and sovereign grace, be all the glory.”

The fruit of Lord Buchan’s conversion and

happy death were seen, not only in the court circles generally, but in his own family. His son immediately succeeded to his estates and title. Of him Whitefield writes: "The present noble earl hath got the blessing, indeed, and seems, upon the best evidence, determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified. He stands here in town, against all opposition, like an impregnable rock, and I humbly hope will prove the Daniel of the age. He must be, nay, he hath been already thrown into a den of lions; but he hath One with him who stops the lion's mouth. You will encourage all God's people to pray for him."

Another, describing his character and religious profession, says: "If the love of freedom, and the love of literature; if eminent proficiency in the fine arts, and an eager fondness to patronize the same proficiency in others; if classic and patriotic enthusiasm, associated with not a few moral virtues, are calculated to recommend any man to the esteem and praise of his contemporaries, David, Earl of Buchan,

could not easily fail of obtaining their highest approbation."

Yet he esteemed not all of these enough. He made a public profession of faith in Christ, and was assailed by a storm of ridicule, reproach, and contempt from his former associates. He wisely strengthened his religious position by appointing as his chaplains, and associating intimately with such men as Wesley, Fletcher, Venn, and Berridge. This pious nobleman died in 1829, at an advanced age, having, it is believed, "fought a good fight, and kept the faith."

His eldest sister, Lady Anne Erskine, was another trophy of Divine grace in this family. In childhood she had been awakened by the faithful preachers of her own Scotland. But she came to Bath with her invalid father, an unconverted, if not a thoughtless, gay woman. Here she experienced the renewing grace of God, and became a bosom companion of Lady Huntingdon.

In 1750, when the work of revival among the

nobility had assumed a somewhat prominent character, and Lady Huntingdon's relation to this revival had become conspicuous, a young lord, about twenty-five years or age, arrived in London from a foreign tour. His grandfather had just died, and he was congratulated for the possession from him of immense wealth and the title of Lord Dartmouth. The young man was consequently envied on account of his flattering worldly prospects. The highest in dignity and office paid him respect, and those esteemed the most refined and fashionable, courted his society. But the young Lord Dartmouth disappointed them all, and displeased and chagrined many, by becoming, just at this period, a despised Methodist. Through an introduction to Lady Huntingdon, he was invited to hear preaching in her parlors. The word proved the savor of life unto him. He openly and boldly professed his sentiments and Christian experience. His marriage, at thirty years of age, to a lady fully sympathizing with these religious feelings, assisted in confirming his

position and increasing his usefulness. At first some of his relatives, who held high offices of state, repelled him from their society on account of his Methodism. But they were won to fellowship for him by his upright and noble character, and he was himself elevated to the office of Secretary of State for the American department, and afterward to the office of Lord Steward, and also to that of Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal. When, at one time, he was offered the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland, one remarked, that if he obtained that position of influence, he should not wonder if he made John Wesley a bishop. The remark showed but little appreciation of the character of either the lord or the great reformer. It was true, however, that Lord Dartmouth was a firm friend to the evangelical clergy. He secured, by his influence at court and with the bishops, the ordination of many useful ministers, who would otherwise have been rejected for their sympathy with Lady Huntingdon and the Wesleys. His wealth assisted in building chapels

and in aiding the humble but efficient “helpers” in their self-sacrificing labors. In the history of the great revival of his day his name appears at every turn. Now he is interceding at court for some wronged clergyman ; then we find him accompanying a leading itinerant on his circuit, making one of his congregation in the fields, or chapels, or by the wayside, or wherever the place of preaching happens to be. We meet him devising, with Lady Huntingdon, plans of extensive usefulness, which may affect largely continents and future generations ; or see him, in unobtrusive charity, supplying the temporal wants of some humble disciple of Christ. The founding of our own *Dartmouth College*, at Hanover, N. H., was laid in part by his munificence, and received its name from that fact. A portrait of his noble person is the chief ornament of one of the college halls.

To Lord and Lady Dartmouth’s example, the reformation among the great was more indebted, we think, than to any of their class, excepting Lady Huntingdon.

It is evident that even the royal family were not wholly uninfluenced for good by the converted nobility and their preachers. The oldest son of George II. died during his father's reign, in the forty-fifth year of his age. As Prince of Wales and heir to the English throne, he had great influence. Upon him Bolingbroke and Chesterfield tried the influence of their subtle infidelity. But curiosity had led the prince to hear privately Whitefield preach. He avowed that he was much pleased, and he pursued his inquiries concerning the doctrines of the Wesleys, Whitefield, and their co-laborers. He was able, therefore, to meet Bolingbroke in argument, who declared that his royal highness was fast verging toward Methodism. The works of Philip Doddridge were read by the prince, and made a deep impression upon his mind. These circumstances were remembered with much interest by his pious friends, in connection with his sudden death.

Thus the great revival, one phase of whose

development we are sketching, reached, in its personal saving influence, quite near the throne itself. Thus it is with the Gospel. It blesses alike the inmate of the cottage and the palace.

## CHAPTER VI.

## DISTINGUISHED FRIENDS.

HAVING made the reader acquainted with some of the “noble few,” we purpose, in this chapter, to introduce him to other distinguished friends of Lady Huntingdon. Though necessarily often in the company of her former associates, and respecting many of them for their position and accomplishments, they could not, after her conversion, be her chosen companions. She sought, and much enjoyed, the fellowship of the people of God. And it was eminently true, as the reader will learn from this chapter, that by forsaking the society of the unconverted, she found an extensive circle of valued Christian friends.

It has been said, “A man’s character is known by the company he keeps.” There is much truth in this remark. We feel, there-

fore, that we cannot better exhibit the religious features of Countess Huntingdon's character, than by introducing the reader to those with whom she was in habitual religious intercourse. If we can understand *their* ability, piety, and influence, we shall be able better to appreciate the countess in these respects.

We have already been made acquainted with those who were her instructors and early collaborators, Whitefield and the Wesleys. One of the next eminent persons whom we find in her company is Dr. Watts. He appears as her friend about the year 1742, only a short time before he left the Church on earth for the Church in heaven. He was residing at the mansion of Sir Thomas Abney, who was at one time Lord Mayor of London.

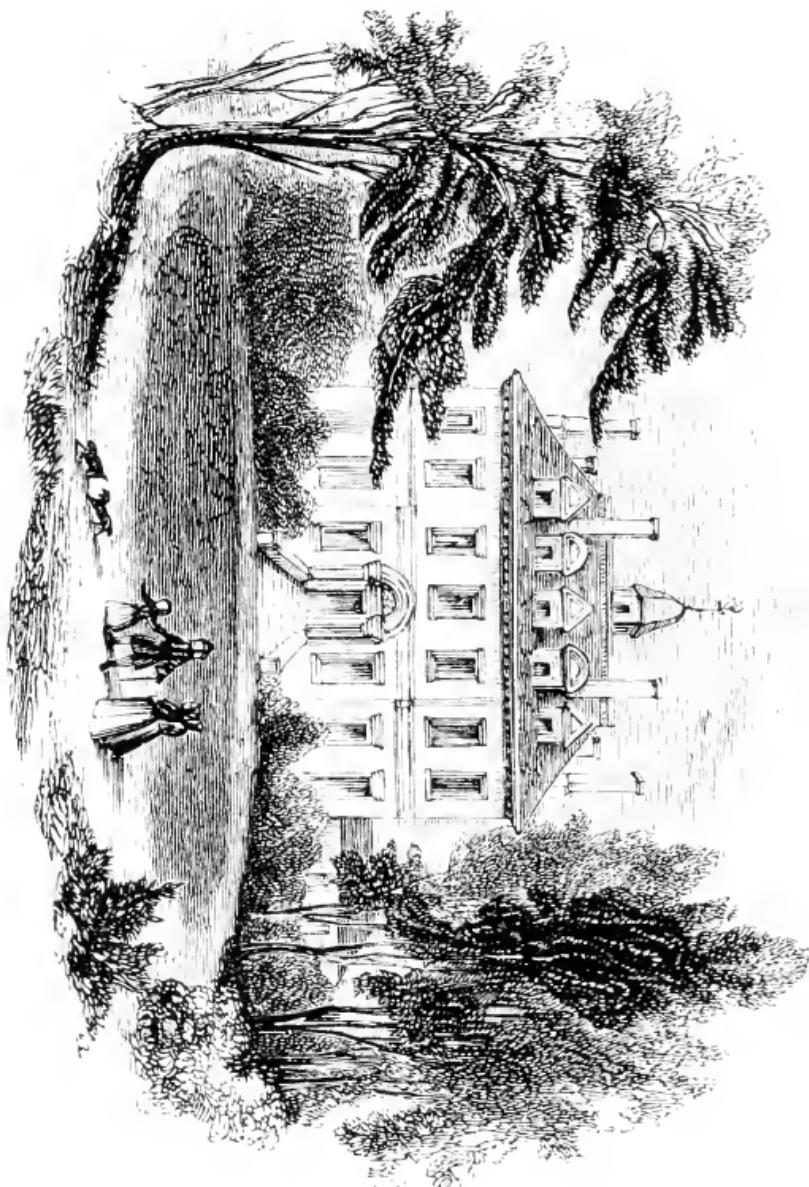
Being invited by Lady Abney, then a widow, to visit her residence and become more fully acquainted with the doctor, Lady Huntingdon, with others of the nobility, and several clergymen, on one occasion dined with her: "You have arrived," remarked Dr. Watts, "on an

extraordinary day, for this day thirty years, I came to the house of my good friend, Sir Thomas Abney, intending to spend but a single week under his hospitable roof, and I have extended my visit to the length of thirty years.” “I consider your visit,” replied Lady Abney, “as the shortest my family ever received.”

At the dinner, the conversation turned upon the preaching of the Wesleys and Whitefield. “It is a blessing,” said Dr. Watts, “of incalculable value that such men should have been raised up as ambassadors of Christ, to make known the great salvation to the minds of men.”

Lady Huntingdon having mentioned several remarkable illustrations of the effects of their powerful preaching, the doctor added: “Such, my lady, are the fruits that will ever follow the faithful proclamation of Divine mercy. The Lord our God will crown his message with success, and give it an abundant entrance into the hearts of men.”

At parting, he took the countess most affectionately by the hand, pronounced a paternal



ABNEY PARK



benediction, and added: "I bless God that I can lie down to sleep in comfort, no way solicitous whether I awake in this world or another." From this time, through the few remaining years of Dr. Watts's life, the countess sought his society and counsel, and was blessed with his approval and co-operation in her labors.

Another honored servant of the Church now steps forward. He is not a Churchman, but a Dissenter, an "Independent," and therefore neither he nor Watts would seem to belong to this company; at any rate, not at this early period of Lady Huntingdon's career. But he is not exclusive in his denominational feelings, and her ladyship already feels that earnest piety is more than creeds. It is Philip Doddridge. His earlier services as tutor in a school for the education of young men for the ministry, and his present position as pastor of a church at Northampton, united with his learning, piety, and talents, make him an influential friend. He was, at this early period

of the countess's labors, near the end of his eminently useful career. He rejoiced in the wonderful work of God which had just commenced. Though its leaders were contemptuously called Methodists, and were everywhere spoken against, he shared willingly their reproach, in becoming their friend and adviser. He preached in their chapels and drawing-rooms. He wrote to them letters of paternal council and reproof. When he fell asleep in Christ, in 1751, Lady Huntingdon and her friends felt that a father and guide had fallen.

The next friend who claims our notice is a true son of "the Church." But his Christian charity knows no parish limits. He has deeply drunk of the fountain of undying love. Like Charles Wesley, he cries:

"O for a trumpet voice  
On all the world to call."

Indeed, he was born the same year with Charles, and became a warm friend of both the Wesleys, and in more than one respect

greatly resembled them. *William Grimshaw* was a marked man, and worthy to be esteemed the companion of the most honored ministers. He obtained a part of his preparation for eminent usefulness, as the Wesleys did, *by what he suffered* in seeking his soul's salvation. Though educated at Cambridge, ordained, and settled over a country parish, he was unconverted. After many struggles, he was one day pleading in an agony that he might know his sins forgiven. During his wrestling, the cross appeared to him in a new and precious light, and in a moment his burden fell off, and he was filled with joy unutterable.

"I was now," he says, "willing to renounce myself, and embrace Christ for my all and in all. O what light and comfort did I enjoy in my own soul, and what a taste of the pardoning love of God."

His long night of inquiry embraced most of the time in which the Wesleys were seeking converting grace. His conversion was a few years later than theirs, not taking place till

1742, but he had not up to this time known them personally, nor had he read any of their writings. At this marked era in his history, a vacancy occurred in the pulpit of the small parish of Haworth, in Yorkshire. Its situation was drear, and the surrounding country sterile and uninviting. The population was scattered, and, what was more dispiriting to a minister, apparently wholly given to irreligion.

To this unpromising field came the newly converted Grimshaw. With a glowing countenance, which reflected the deep emotions of a warm heart, he preached Christ to the people. His free, extemporaneous style, his earnest manner, and, most of all, his doctrine of present salvation, received by faith and witnessed by the Holy Spirit, attracted large crowds, some of whom came from a great distance. Hundreds were converted to God, and the interest in his ministry continued intense to its close, twenty years from this time.

The fame of his preaching spread through the country, and Ingham, who was then preaching through Yorkshire with great success, invited Grimshaw to accompany him to some of his preaching-places. It was on one of these preaching excursions that he visited Ledstone, the seat of the Hastings family; here Lord and Lady Huntingdon became acquainted with him. Grimshaw preached with great zeal in the vicinity, sometimes in the parish churches; but, seldom waiting for the tardy consent of the clergy, he lifted up his voice wherever a congregation could be gathered. “I cannot follow Brother Grimshaw,” said the excellent John Newton, who loved a more quiet field; “he loves to live in the fire.”

Besides very frequent excursions with those more exclusively itinerant, and answering repeated calls of Lady Huntingdon to supply her chapels at important points, Mr. Grimshaw formed two circuits of his own, which he traveled alternately every week. One

of these he called his idle week, because he preached *only* fourteen sermons. Some weeks he preached *thirty*, and not unfrequently twenty or twenty-five sermons. He sometimes preached five times a day, and traveled, to do so, forty miles. Though thus itinerating, his labors in his own parish were increasing. There were within its bounds four villages, from which but few came to church. In each of them he preached three times each month, and thus drew within the sound of the gospel many who would not, or could not otherwise hear it.

He learned that some excused themselves from coming to church, because they imagined their apparel not fine enough to meet the gaze of the church-attending people. To accommodate these, he added evening preaching to his labors.

He was frequent in his visits from house to house, warning, encouraging, and instructing, that by all means he might save some. So overwhelmed was he at times with a sense

of God's presence, that he became absorbed in prayer and praise. Often, at the name of Jesus, he would give instant utterance to his emotion. Such labors as above described, and such divine unction, were sealed with the conversion of many souls. Mr. Grimshaw soon found twelve hundred communicants in his own church, the most of whom gave evidence of saving faith; and his sermons in the saloons of the pious nobility, and those in the highways and hedges, doubtless won many more. His friendship for the Wesleys, and his co-operation with their labors, continued to the end of his life. Though disagreeing on some minor points of doctrine, they agreed in Christian fellowship and love.

Not only was he frequent in his services at Lady Huntingdon's parlors and chapels, but she sought often the parsonage and church at Haworth, for seasons of special refreshing from the presence of God; and it appears from the following extract of a letter to her ladyship, that her visits to him were profitable

and highly prized. “When will your ladyship revive us with another visit? What blessings did the Lord shower upon us the last time you were here! and how did our hearts burn within us to proclaim his love and grace to perishing sinners! Come and animate us afresh, aid us by your counsels and prayers, communicate a spark of your glowing zeal, and stir us up to renewed activity in the cause of God. All the dear apostles go on well, all pray for your ladyship, and all long for your coming among us again. I have been a long round since you were here, and have seen Brothers Ingham, Venn, Conyers, and Bentley, all alive, and preaching Christ crucified with wonderful success.”

Quite frequent contact with such a mind and heart, with occasional interchange of letters, could not fail to be an important item in determining Lady Huntingdon’s character, and in furthering her labors.

Mr. Grimshaw died in the triumphs of the faith he preached. His only son was, until

after his father's death, a drunkard, but the influence of prayer and pious example finally prevailed, and he was genuinely converted.

"What will my father say," exclaimed the restored prodigal, "when he sees *me* in heaven?"

A very different, but very excellent man next claims our attention. Young Romaine was at the University when the Wesleys and Whitefield were exciting attention as the leaders of "the godly club." But his sympathies were not with them. Ambitious for distinction, and surrounded by young men of fashion and wealth, he thought but little of serious things. He, however, entered the ministry, and obtained the pulpit of St. George's Church, Hanover Square, London, with a connection, as lecturer, with St. Dunstan's Church. A change was wrought by the Holy Spirit in Mr. Romaine, and his preaching assumed a different character.

It was at this period (1750) that the shock of an earthquake was felt in London. In mid-

winter, in the deep darkness of the night, the earth trembled, and the people feared exceedingly. While at this solemn moment Charles Wesley so eloquently exclaimed at the Foundry: "We will not fear though the earth be removed, and the mountains be cast into the sea," and Whitefield preached to the excited multitudes on Kensington Common, on a "judgment to come," Romaine lifted up his voice at St. George's, crying, "Turn ye, for why will ye die?"

As the Methodist reformers had been excluded from the Church, it is said that no pulpit belonging to the clergy improved this solemn occasion, except Romaine's. His natural eloquence, his learning, his heartfelt earnestness, and, most of all, his new doctrine of present salvation by faith, drew crowds to his church. His genteel and worldly parishioners were annoyed. Romaine was soon honored with suffering for Christ's sake. He was dismissed from St. George's and branded as a Methodist. His lectures at St. Dunstan's afforded him the

pittance of one hundred dollars annually, which was all that was left him for the support of his family; and even this was soon taken from him through the hate of his enemies. Lady Huntingdon threw around him her timely and influential countenance in this emergency. She made him her chaplain, and for some time the popular clergyman preached to the poor in her ladyship's kitchen. He subsequently administered to the polite assemblies of her parlors and chapels, and everywhere held up Christ as the salvation of the world.

For years his income was only a few hundred dollars, but he learned, in poverty and in the consequent necessity of rigid economy, to be content. He was legally elected to the Church of St. Ann's, Blackfriars, London, but was permitted to enter it as the minister, only after years of litigation. When congratulated by Lady Huntingdon on the decision of the court in his favor, he writes: "Now when I was setting up my rest, and had begun to say unto my soul, 'Soul, take thine ease,' I am called into a

public station; and to the sharpest engagement, just as I had got into winter quarters, an engagement for life. I can see nothing before, so long as the breath is in my body, but war, and that with unreasonable men, a divided parish, an angry clergy, a wicked Sodom, and a wicked world, all to be resisted and overcome. Besides all these, a sworn enemy, subtle and cruel, with whom I can make no peace, no, not a moment's truce, night nor day, with all his children and his host, is aiming at my destruction. When I take counsel of the flesh, I begin to faint; but when I go to the sanctuary, I see that my Master is Almighty, and then he makes my courage revive. . . . I shall want my Jesus more, and get closer to him. Methinks I hear his voice, 'Come closer, soul; come closer! nearer yet; I will bring you into circumstances that you cannot do without me!'"

At first, many heard him with distrust; but he lived to see his enemies at peace with him, and many souls converted. Upon few, if any, of those who co-operated with her in the ex-

tension of the great revival, did the Countess of Huntingdon lean for counsel more than upon Romaine. Where we meet him again, as we purpose to do, amid the outpourings of the Spirit, in company with Grimshaw, Wesley, and others, we shall see that he was not a son of thunder, like the former, nor had he the wonderful weight of character of the latter, but that he diffused a steady, holy light.

Methodism, through its whole history until the present time, has been marked by the astonishing diversity of the gifts of its ministers, and for the production of gifts of wonderful originality. There was a constellation of worthies gathered about Wesley and Lady Huntingdon respectively, any one of whom was a host in himself, but widely differing from each other in every thing but a common baptism of the Holy Ghost. A sketch of John Berridge, of Everton, will illustrate a part of the above statement. He was a genius in the highest sense of the word. Though so hard a student in his earlier years that he excelled most of

competitors in classical attainments, and so good a scholar that he attained a “fellowship” in the University of Cambridge, yet his strength lay in his *gifts*, not in his acquisitions. His combinations of the most common thoughts arrested attention, and the language with which he uttered them fixed them in the memory. His humor, at all times overflowing, made him liable to the charge of buffoonery; yet his deep piety generally gave it a seriousness which made it an element of great power in his preaching. Figures, the most striking and original, came crowding upon his mind when he spoke. The most trite subject assumed a sparkling brilliancy under his touch. At times his eccentricity seems insufferable in a Christian minister, yet John Berridge was a self-sacrificing, laborious, and successful servant of Christ. He inherited a fortune, but expended it all in relieving the poor about him, in supporting the less favored itinerants, and in helping to extend in every way the Redeemer’s kingdom. Though without a family,

he saved nothing from his ample living at Everton. Indeed, he was often in pressing want.

His labors were immense. He, like Grimshaw, formed circuits in the country around him. He preached ten or twelve sermons weekly, and rode in the same time nearly one hundred miles, and continued this practice for twenty-four years.

He possessed a tall, manly frame, a loud, musical voice, and an open, attractive countenance. When to these natural advantages was added a living, spiritual power, he became one of the most attractive preachers of the period in which he lived, though "there were giants in those days." Under his preaching, in his own parish especially, there were more of those strange effects upon his hearers, which have puzzled, if not at times stumbled, the most pious. As the words from his lips fell upon the ears of the people, they sometimes fell instantly to the ground. They lost all physical power, and were strangely exercised both in body and

mind. Wesley, Lady Huntingdon, Romaine, and Grimshaw visited him, and witnessed these seemingly extravagant proceedings, and bore testimony to the genuineness, notwithstanding, of the work of God in them. Wesley tarried with him, at one time, several days, and gives the following opinion of his character: "Mr. Berridge appears to be one of the most simple as well as the most sensible men of all it pleased God to employ in reviving primitive Christianity. They came near ten or twelve miles to hear him; and very few came in vain. His word is in power. He speaks as plain and home as John Nelson, but with all the propriety of Romaine and the tenderness of Mr. Hervey."

Though Berridge was fearlessly independent before his congregation, and among his brethren in the ministry, he seems to have been a favorite with all. He was on the most intimate terms with Lady Huntingdon, though never yielding as much to her suggestions and management as did most about her. Though labor-

ing much for her, it was evidently always, in his own way and time.

The reader is prepared, we think, for a few extracts from his letters to the countess. They exhibit the man and the minister. Unlike most letters which are spread upon the biographical page, they are so natural, so evidently from the heart, and are pervaded with a genius so remarkable and a piety so sincere, that they are intensely interesting. They will also illustrate still further the character of his labors.

Lady Huntingdon, having written an urgent letter to Mr. Berridge, setting forth the peculiar state of the work at Bath, and requesting him to supply the pulpit for a few weeks, proposing, as it seems, to supply his pulpit with some one whom she deemed less attractive to the gentry, Berridge replies:

“ **MY LADY**,—I had a letter from your ladyship last Saturday, and another from Lord Buchan. His letter required an immediate answer, which I sent on Monday, and then went

out a-preaching. I am now returned, and sit down to answer yours. But what must I say? Verily, you are a good piper, but I know not how to dance. I love your scorpion letters dearly, though they rake the flesh off my bones ; and I believe your eyes are better than my own, but I cannot yet read with your glasses. I do know that I want quickening every day, but I do not see that I want a journey to Bath. I have been whipped pretty severely for fighting out of my proper regiment, and for rambling out of the bounds of my rambles ; and while the smart of the rod remains upon my back, it will weigh more with me than a thousand arguments. All marching officers are not general officers, and every one should search out the extent of his commission. A Gospel minister who has a Church will have a diocese annexed to it, and is only an overseer or bishop of that diocese ; and let him, like faithful Grimshaw, look well to it. An evangelist who has no Church is a metropolitan, or cosmopolitan, and may ramble all the kingdom

or all the world over, and these are more highly honored than the other, though they are not always duly sensible of the honor. They are nearest to the apostolic character of any.

“ But whom do you recommend to the care of my Church? . . . I do not want a helper merely to stand up in my pulpit, but to ride round my district. And I fear my weekly circuits would not suit a London or a Bath divine, nor any tender evangelist that is environed with prunella. Long rides and miry roads in sharp weather; cold houses to sit in with very moderate fuel, and three or four children roaring or rocking about you; coarse food and meager drink; lumpy beds to lie on and too short for the feet; and stiff blankets, like boards, for a covering. Rise at five in the morning to preach; at seven breakfast on tea that smells very sickly; at eight mount a horse, with boots never cleaned, and then ride home, praising God for all mercies. Sure I must stay till your academy is completed before I can have an assistant.

“But enough of these matters. Let us now talk of Jesus, whom I treat in my letters as I deal in my heart, crowd him into a corner, when the first place and the whole room belongeth of right to himself. He has been whispering of late that I cannot keep myself nor the flock committed to me; but has not hinted a word as yet that I do wrong in keeping close to my fold. And my instructions, you know, must come from the Lamb, and not from the Lamb’s wife. He has taught me to labor for him more cheerfully, and to loathe myself more heartily than I could before. I see myself nothing, and feel myself vile, and hide my head, ashamed of all my sorry services. I want his fountain every day, his intercession every moment, and would not give a groat for the broadest fig-leaves or the brightest human rags to cover me. A robe I must have, one of one whole piece, broad as the law, spotless as the light, and richer than an angel ever wore, the robe of Jesus.”

Directly the opposite of Berridge, in many

features of his character, was John Fletcher, another intimate friend, adviser, and co-laborer of Lady Huntingdon. He possessed Berridge's genius, without his eccentricities. Though not as learned, and never favored with the physical strength which sustained Berridge in Herculean labors, his life was more perfectly hid with Christ. Though Fletcher lived at a period which was blessed with more brilliant pulpit orators than any other, perhaps, in the history of the Church, yet he was one of the most eloquent. He had a vivid imagination, and possessed great affluence of thought and richness of diction, but his hearers were not allowed to dwell upon these incidents of the orator. The fervor of his religious feelings took full possession of himself, and subdued his congregation. With him his *theme*, Christ, was everything, himself nothing.

Lady Huntingdon thus notices her introduction to Fletcher. In a letter dated March, 1758, she says: "I have seen Mr. Fletcher, and was both pleased and refreshed by the

interview. He was accompanied by Mr. Wesley, who had frequently mentioned him in terms of high commendation, as had Mr. Whitefield, Mr. Charles Wesley, and others, so that I was anxious to become acquainted with one so devoted, who appears to glory in nothing save in the cross of our divine Lord and Master. Hearing that he preached in French, his native language, I mentioned the case of the French prisoners at Tunbridge. May the Lord of the harvest bless his word, and send forth many such faithful ambassadors."

Mr. Fletcher notices this early acquaintance with the countess in the following manner, in a letter to Charles Wesley: "I was this morning with Lady Huntingdon, who salutes you, and unites with me in saying, that we have need of you to make one in our three-fold cord, and to beg you would hasten your return, when Providence permits. Our conversation was deep, and full of the energy of faith on the part of the countess; as to me, I sat as Paul at the feet of Gamaliel."

Lady Huntingdon, appreciating Fletcher's abilities and piety, immediately invited him to become one of the preachers who, as other duties permitted, should administer the sacrament and preach the word to the elegant assemblies at her residence. He received this invitation with characteristic modesty. He says, in a letter to Wesley, that he had almost resolved absolutely to fly the houses of the great, without excepting that of the countess; but "charity, politeness, and reason" accompanying her offer, his resolution wavered, and, at Mr. Wesley's advice, gave way, and with trembling he preached from the text: "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach the unsearchable riches of Christ."

His word was with such interest and profit to his hearers, that he spent the following winter in London, preaching at times for Wesley in his chapels, and frequently not only for Lady Huntingdon, but in the parlors of Lady Gertrude Hotham and Lady Fanny Shirley.

Having thus labored without pecuniary reward, Lady Huntingdon, very naturally thinking that his temporal wants should be regarded by those whom he served, sent to him a check while supplying a distant chapel for her. The acknowledgment is in Fletcher's own spirit. "Generous as you are, madam, I believe you would have saved me the shame of receiving the present you made me at Paddington, had you foreseen what uneasy thoughts it raised in my heart. Is this not making godliness a gain? Can I in conscience receive what is devoted to the poor, when I am not in actual want? I am not ashamed of living upon charity, but to receive it without being an immediate object is what gives me more uneasiness than want could possibly do. And now I am deprived for many months of the unspeakable advantage of living upon providence, and must live upon a stock as the rich of this world! Is not this a lesson? And does not your generosity, madam, bid me look to Jesus for poverty of spirit, without

which all outward acts are nothing but pride, sin, misery, and lies?"

An anecdote of the first acquaintance of Fletcher with Berridge exhibits a strong feature in the character of each.

Just before Fletcher's settlement at Madeley, having occasion to visit London, he availed himself of the opportunity to call on Berridge at Everton. Being personally unknown to each other, Fletcher introduced himself as one seeking his counsel concerning his Christian and ministerial duties. Berridge, perceiving his foreign accent, inquired from what country he came.

"A Swiss, from the canton of Berne," replied Fletcher.

"From Berne!" said Berridge; "then you can give me some account of a young countryman of yours, one John Fletcher, who has lately preached for the Messrs. Wesley, and of whose talents, learning, and piety, they both speak in terms of high eulogy. Do you know him?"

“Yes, sir, I know him intimately ; and did those gentlemen know him as well, they would not speak of him in such terms, for which he is more obliged for their partial friendship than to his own merits.”

“You surprise me by speaking so coldly of a countryman, in whose praise they are so warm.”

“I have the best reason to do so. I am John Fletcher.”

“If you be John Fletcher you must do me the favor to take my pulpit to-morrow ; and when we are better acquainted, without implicitly receiving your statement or that of your friends, I shall be able to judge for myself.”

Thus commenced a friendship which the exciting controversies even of after years did not impair.

An eminent clergyman, a co-laborer of Lady Huntingdon, and an opponent of Fletcher on the Calvinistic question, thus spoke of him after the dust of the controversy had blown away. Speaking to a brother clergyman of Fletcher, he exclaimed :

“Sir, he was a luminary ; a *luminary* did I say ? he was a SUN ! I have known all the great men for these fifty years, but I have known none like him. I was intimately acquainted with him, and was under the same roof with him once for six weeks, during which time I never heard him say a single word which was not proper to be spoken, and which had not a tendency to minister grace to the hearers. One time, meeting him when he was very ill of a hectic fever, which he had brought upon himself by his intense labors in the ministry, I said, ‘I am sorry to find you so ill.’ Mr. Fletcher answered, with the greatest sweetness: ‘Sorry, sir ; why are you sorry ? It is the chastening of my heavenly Father, and I rejoice in it. I love the rod of my God, and rejoice therein as an expression of his love and affection toward me.’”

We should leave an imperfect record of the shining lights which gathered around the countess, if we omitted to mention the name of Henry Venn. Of the middle stature, robust frame, and ruddy countenance, with a clear

and powerful voice, yet tender and persuasive utterance, he was a public speaker to attract attention and be long remembered. Mr. Venn had entered the ministry without a knowledge of converting grace. He was awakened by the chastening hand of God in sickness, and the timely reading of “Law’s Serious Call to a Holy Life;” but he did not learn immediately what he most needed to learn, “a present salvation by faith in Christ.” In this state of mind he became acquainted, through a mutual friend, with Lady Huntingdon. At her house he became the pupil in religious truth of Whitefield and the Wesleys. These new acquaintances were blessed to him as the teachers of the more excellent way. Venn became a minister of strong faith, burning religious fervor, and abundant labors. Huddersfield, one hundred and ninety miles northwest of London, in West Yorkshire, was the important field of his labors. From this center he sent forth an influence, which was felt through a wide circuit. He preached in the villages in neighbor-

ing parishes, in barns, private houses, or in the fields; fearless of reproach, and reckless of his own convenience. He was alike at home and faithful before the polite assemblies of Lady Huntingdon's parlors, and amid the uncultivated crowds from the mines, workshops, and highways. Though not the first to enter the ranks of those reproached as "Methodists," of Lady Huntingdon's circle, he labored long and successfully with them.

We have given a passing introduction of the reader to some of the prominent of Lady Huntingdon's co-laborers. In a previous chapter we noticed a few of the converts from among the nobility, but we have not yet seen any of the converts of this class occupying the pulpit. But there was one, connected with the highest families, himself possessed of great riches, whom the Spirit of God awakened, converted, and sent into the ministry. This was Martin Madan.

He was nominally a lawyer in London, but living in splendor, and indulging in dissipating amusements.

Being at a coffee-house one evening, John Wesley became the subject of remark. His fame had then reached every corner of the great metropolis, and spread far and wide over the country. Madan's companions, knowing his power of imitation and ridicule, proposed that he go and hear Wesley, who was preaching in the vicinity, and return and exhibit to them his *manner* and *discourse* for their amusement.

To this Madan agreed. As he entered the place of worship, Wesley named his text: "*Prepare to meet thy God.*" Pausing solemnly, he looked round upon his hearers. The  *mocker* felt that the preacher knew his very thoughts, and the wicked purpose for which he had come. Wesley proceeded to present eternal truth so earnestly and so sincerely, and in so attractive a manner, that Madan was not only interested, but deeply awakened.

"Have you taken the old Methodist off?" inquired his companions as he returned. "No," was the serious reply, "but he has taken me off."

From that time he sought the society of the leaders of Methodism. He became a clergyman, the intimate friend of Lady Huntingdon, and a helper in the work which she and the Wesleys, and their noble band, were carrying forward. Though the brother of a bishop, he did not seek honors in the Church. Though rich, he labored to save men in the daily work of a pastor and preacher. His personal appearance and natural powers of eloquence were exceedingly attractive. For many years he was a light of great brilliancy in the Church of God.

It would have been strange if, thus surrounded with friends in toil and holy living of the sterner sex, Lady Huntingdon should have found no female laborer with her spirit, and somewhat of her abilities and influence. Such a one was Lady Wilhelmina Maxwell Glenorchy, of Scotland. Some time in the year 1765, being about twenty-three years of age, she made, with Lord Glenorchy, a tour on the continent of Europe. When returning they tarried

in the vicinity of the residence of Sir Rowland Hill. His daughter, Miss Hill, near the age of Lady Glenorchy, a young woman of refined education and great talents, was deeply and actively pious. An intimate friendship was formed between them, and the Scotch noblewoman became an humble Christian. Her life had been spent in gayety, amid wealth and aristocracy. Her conversion filled many of her friends, especially her husband, with sorrow and resentment. She was hurried away from her Christian associates to new scenes of worldly amusements; flattery and unkind authority were tried in vain to shake her pious purpose. She sought and obtained the friendship and counsel of the leading Methodist reformers, and shared with them their labors and reproach. She ultimately became a prominent co-laborer with Lady Huntingdon in all her enterprises.

Her personal beauty and endowments of mind are said to have been remarkable, and the wealth, of which she had control, was ample.

She was the Lady Huntingdon of Scotland, building chapels, supporting preachers, and suffering reproach for Christ.

Such were some of the *distinguished friends* of our *elect* lady, whose labors with them we will further follow in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER VII.

## ITINERANT LABORS.

WE have thus far presented to the view of the reader the means with which, under God, an active and sanctified mind, like Lady Huntingdon's, might exert an extended influence for good. Education, position, wealth, a circle of congenial spirits lately brought to God, and almost daily companionship with some of the most able and faithful ministers of her times, all together afforded an opportunity for usefulness on the grandest scale. How well she improved it, we shall endeavor to show.

It is with propriety that we speak of the itinerant labors of Lady Huntingdon. She traveled extensively with those who occupied the sacred desk, being often the instrument of their success. And, as will be seen, not only traveled with them, but organized an itinerancy by

which efficiency was given to their preaching.

As early as 1755 the countess invited all the clergymen who had caught the spirit of the reformation, to meet at her residence. A few of the most earnest came. The next year she called another meeting, which was more fully attended, and partook much of the spirit of Wesley's *conferences*. At these gatherings much time was spent in prayer, and sermons were preached to multitudes, which the presence of so many eminent and zealous ministers attracted. But the special object of these conferences was, to consult concerning the continuance and spread of God's work, which had so well begun. The countess, as she had called, so she seems to have been the ruling spirit of these meetings. In 1762 her *nineteenth conference* assembled at Leeds, so that it appears they were not annual, but frequent, as occasion required. At this meeting John and Charles Wesley, Mr. Whitefield, Venn, Romaine, Madan, with others, each of

whom was of himself “a standard bearer,” were present. Great grace rested upon them, and they each, at its close, went forth to the chosen field to gather fresh trophies for the Redeemer. Lady Huntingdon made a wide circuit, visiting a little struggling society here, and encouraging there a clergyman who was ready to faint by extraordinary difficulties.

It will be remembered that, in the earlier part of our narrative, we noticed Lady Huntingdon’s connection with *lay preaching*. She approved and encouraged it. Many lay preachers looked to her to direct as well as authorize their labors. Her talents, piety, and position led even many of the zealous clergy to submit to, perhaps we ought to say, to *seek* her guidance in their labors, in the immediate work of the reformation. At these conferences, and at other times, Providence seemed, therefore, to assign her the duty of directing them to their circuits and stations. A regular exchange of preachers, *once in six or eight weeks*, by her sole appointment, was adopted. She

also appointed the lay managers of the local affairs of the society. Those so stationed were called "Lady Huntingdon's preachers," and the "connection" so formed, "Lady Huntingdon's Connection."

Though her people were less efficiently organized, she held to them much the same relation that Wesley did to his. Her authority was considered parental and decisive. The purity of her motives being never doubted, and the general soundness of her judgment trusted, the preachers went at her bidding, feeling that the Great Head of the Church guided them through her. After having obtained thus the directing of a considerable number of preachers, she conceived the idea of "canvassing" the whole of England for Christ. Her plan was to divide the kingdom into six circuits, and appoint six eminent revivalists to each one, directing them to preach in *every* city, town, and considerable village, where such laborers were not already preaching. This she accomplished, again and again. To

defray the expense, she sent a circular to all her societies, requesting collections, paying of it herself two hundred and fifty dollars. We understand that she determined the amount, which was of course small, of the salary of her preachers generally, guaranteeing their payment, or at least seeing that it was done. To do this, she drew generously upon her own resources, solicited the help of her noble friends, and rendered systematic the annual collections of her connection. The clerical friends whom we have introduced to the reader, whose legal incomes allowed it, gave freely their services.

But we will return to the six “canvassers” of the kingdom. A passing notice of the report they from time to time made of their progress, will afford a general idea of their labors, their spirit, and their success.

One says: “A table is my pulpit, the canopy of the heavens my sounding board.” “The crowds attracted by these means were truly astonishing. At Darlaston, we had at least

fifteen hundred poor colliers and nailers." "In the streets of Dudley the congregation was computed to be two thousand. In the evening, at the Market Cross, there were not less, at a moderate computation, than five thousand."

Another writes: "At Bosveal not less than ten thousand assembled in a large, deep hollow ground, rendered convenient for the preachers and hearers by circular benches cut out of the sides from top to bottom. A universal solemnity and awe sat on every countenance, and the Lord was in the midst of us. Even the people of the world were reminded of the judgment day, from beholding this innumerable and deeply affected assembly." "Many were affected under the word, some appeared to be broken down, all were very solemn, and many much affected, particularly some drunkards."

The foundation was laid, in many places, by these itinerants, of new societies, which were watered by the Holy Spirit, and grew into permanent churches. Pious but lukewarm

parish ministers were excited to activity, and the ungodly clergy and men of the world provoked to revile and persecute. Yet generally they were hailed as messengers of God, and returned rejoicing that their preaching was not in vain in the Lord.

In 1757, Lady Huntingdon, knowing Mr. Madan's popular gifts, and great success in awakening sinners, sent him out under her patronage, on a general tour. He traveled through six counties, accompanied, at times, by Mr. Romaine. Everywhere crowds attended his ministry, and great awakening followed.

We will now present to the reader a view of the several more prominent places upon which Lady Huntingdon bestowed liberally her wealth, and largely her labor and watch-care. *London* is the first point of interest. When Whitefield erected his first rude tabernacle at Moorfields, it was, in part, by her liberality; and when it gave way to a second and more substantial building, he leaned much

upon her counsels and contributions. Indeed, the enterprise originated with Lady Huntingdon. She writes: "I am much interested about the intended building, and trust it will be for the glory of our common Lord, and the increase of his kingdom among men. O that very many precious souls may be there awakened, renewed, pardoned, and consecrated to God." She appealed to her wealthy friends, while Whitefield received the contributions of his congregations. Six thousand dollars were soon collected, with which the work was begun.

While the heathenism of Moorfields was being enlightened by the preaching at "the Foundry" of Wesley, and at the new Tabernacle of Whitefield, the "West End" of London was claiming the attention of the reformers.

Whitefield had been sadly persecuted there, and driven from his place of worship by violence. Out of the opposition, by God's blessing, grew the "*Tottenham Court Chapel*," dedicated about three years after the "new Taber-

nacle," namely, 1756, and became, like that, famous for the eloquent and successful ministrations of its founder. He says, in writing of its completion: "A neighboring doctor calls it '*Whitefield's soul-trap.*' I pray the Friend of sinners to make it a soul-trap indeed to many wandering creatures. We have already had some glorious earnests of future blessings. Convictions and conversions go on here. Last Sunday there was a wonderful stirring among the dry bones; some great people came and begged they might have a constant seat."

Among others who came was a young man who had left pious parents in the country to do business in the great Metropolis, and its allurements had overthrown his principles. He came to the Chapel with others, "to take off" the famous Methodist and to disturb the meeting. But the sermon and the associations of the place brought to his recollection, with convicting force, his home instructions. He became pious, was educated by Lady Hunt-

ingdon, and long labored as a successful minister. We give the above as an instance of the fruit of the labors at this Chapel.

So much had the countess done toward the erection of Tottenham Court Chapel, and so deeply interested was she in it, that Whitefield proposed to transfer his control of it to her. But the offer was not accepted. It remained in the Whitefield connection until 1828, when, his *seventy-two years' lease* having run out, the trustees purchased the freehold, and thoroughly repaired it. It was re-consecrated to God in 1831, by the venerable William Jay. Thus the seed sown one hundred years before our present writing, still bears fruit.

Until the year 1770, Lady Huntingdon had confined her efforts to supply the needy in London with places of worship, to the opening of her own residences, and inducing other noble women to open theirs for the preaching of the gospel, and to the assistance she had rendered others in building chapels.

She began now to secure chapels almost

entirely at her own expense, and which were therefore under her control. The first of these was in *Ewen Street*. It had been occupied by the Quakers, but under the countess's management a large and permanent congregation of her connection was gathered. About two years later a large and commodious meeting-house in the heart of Westminster became vacant. It would seat three thousand people. This she purchased and repaired, and appointed to its pulpit her most able and eloquent collaborators. To it gathered multitudes of souls, and many were converted.

The *Mulberry Gardens Chapel* was the next in order, built at Wapping, (in London,) and dedicated in 1776. Its walls went up amid some misunderstandings among its friends, and not until the countess's patience in well-doing had well been tried did she secure it fully to her control, and see in it the work of God prospering. But God, in the end, greatly blessed this house too, which she had builded for him.

From London she turned her attention to

Brighton. It is a fashionable bathing place, seaport, and market town. It is situated in Sussex county, fifty-two miles south from London. For its importance as a watering place, it has largely been indebted to the patronage of the royal family. About the time Lady Huntingdon began her public labors, the Prince of Wales made Brighton his favorite place of residence.

The illness of her son Henry, of whose death we have spoken, caused the countess to remove to this place about 1756. Ever watchful for occasions of usefulness, she sought the houses of the poor and destitute. The case of a soldier's sick wife, and her infant twins, excited her especial sympathy. After relieving her temporal wants, she entered into serious and earnest conversation with her concerning the interests of her soul. The woman was affected to tears. During her ladyship's repeated visits, the people coming to the public bakehouse, from which the poor woman's room was separated by only a narrow partition, heard her

religious conversation. This being rumored abroad, not only the bake-house, but the soldiers' rooms, became crowded with poor females desiring to hear such truth. Unexpectedly, the countess found herself the center of the interest of quite a congregation of serious persons, asking what they should do to be saved. She met them regularly at the sick-bed of the dying mother, and read and expounded portions of Scripture, and pointed out to them the way of eternal life.

On one of these occasions a blacksmith, a notoriously wicked man, came and took his seat stealthily in one corner of the room. None but females had been admitted before. At first the countess doubted the propriety of permitting him to remain, but, after a little hesitation, proceeded, taking no notice of him. He listened attentively, was awakened by what he heard, became a holy man, and for *twenty-nine years* eminently adorned a Christian profession, and died in great triumph.

While thus imitating her Master in doing

good, Lady Huntingdon was one day accosted in the streets of Brighton by a lady of genteel appearance and courteous manners, with the exclamation, "O, madam, you are come!"

Surprised at such an address, Lady Huntingdon inquired her meaning.

"Madam," replied the lady, with serious earnestness, "I dreamed three years ago that a tall lady, whose dress was distinctly impressed upon my mind, would come to this place and do much good. The impressions of that dream I have never been able to dismiss; the lady of my dream appeared *precisely as you do now.*"

The ladies thus singularly introduced became intimately acquainted. The stranger was converted through Lady Huntingdon's instrumentality, and died, in one year from their first meeting, in great peace.

Though the visits of Lady Huntingdon to Brighton were only occasional, the encouragement she received, by the blessing of God upon her labors, induced her, in 1761, to erect a small but neat chapel near her residence. Mr.

Madan opened it with appropriate services, and first officiated as its pastor. During the season of the resort of the great and fashionable to Brighton, Lady Huntingdon called to her aid her most distinguished friends. Romaine, Berridge, Venn, and Fletcher came in turn. On one occasion she had earnestly entreated, by letter, the services of Berridge, to which he sent the following very Berridge-like reply :

“I cannot see my call to Brighton ; and I ought to see it for myself, and not another for me. Was any good done when I was there ? It was God’s doing ; all the glory be to him. This shows I did not then go without my Master, but it is no proof of a second call. Many single calls have I had to villages when some good was done, but no further call. I am not well able to ride so long a journey, and my heart is utterly set against wheel-carriages in these roads. Indeed, I see not my call ; I cannot think of the journey ; and therefore I pray your ladyship to think no more of it. I write thus plainly, not out of frowardness, I trust,

but to save your ladyship the trouble of sending the second request, and myself the pain of returning a second denial. You threaten me, madam, like a pope, not like a mother in Israel, when you declare roundly that God will scourge me if I do not come. But I know your ladyship's good meaning, and this menace was not despised. It made me slow in resolving, and, of course, slow in writing ; it made me also attend to the state of my own mind during its deliberations, which was as follows : While I was looking toward the sea, partly drawn thither by the hope of doing good, and partly driven by your *Vatican Bull*, I found nothing but thorns in my way ; but as soon as I turned my eyes from it, I found peace. And now, while I am sending a peremptory denial, I feel no check or reproof within, which I generally do when I am not willing to go about my Master's business."

So successful was the preaching of the gospel in Lady Huntingdon's chapel at Brighton, that it was first enlarged, and subsequently rebuilt,

in her lifetime. The second house has been enlarged in our own day, and now stands a monument of her zealous and successful labors.\*

The success of Lady Huntingdon's efforts at Brighton, naturally led her to watch the openings of Providence for other positions for the location of chapels. The wilds of the county of Sussex, in the south of England, had long seemed to her to invite gospel labor. While thus looking and waiting for the effectual door to be opened there, the mansion of Oathall, in that county, was offered her on a lease by its owner.\*

This offer was instantly and joyfully accepted. Its large hall was neatly fitted and furnished for a chapel, and its upper rooms for the residence of the countess, the home, while supplying the pulpit, of the preachers. Here the neglected poor, especially, of the surrounding country, gladly assembled to hear the word of life from the lips of eloquent and

\* A recent proprietor had emigrated to America, and became the Governor of the colony of Massachusetts Bay.

holy men. Two illustrations of the effect, under God, of the labors at this place, will interest the readers, and cause them to remember *Oathall*.

Soon after the countess removed there, Captain Scott of the army was quartered, with his command, in the neighborhood. He belonged to a distinguished family, and had himself gained some military "glory" in battle. His prospects of attaining fame and an eminent position in his profession, were considered good. One day, being out on a shooting party, he was caught in a violent rain, and sought shelter in a farmer's residence. The humble host entertained his guest with religious conversation. His remarks were so touching and heartfelt, and his familiarity with the things of God so apparent, that the captain was at once interested. He inquired where he had learned these things. "There," said the farmer, pointing to the mansion of Oathall, "and a great man is now preaching there. Please, sir, go and hear him."

The advice was taken, and the warrior soon became an humble soldier of the cross. From laboring privately he almost immediately began to preach publicly. His gifts as well as grace were great, and as his regiment itinerated, he gathered about him large and deeply interested congregations, to hear of the salvation of which his own heart had become a recent partaker.

Fletcher thus speaks of him in a letter to the countess: "I went last Monday to meet Captain Scott, one of the first-fruits that have grown for the Lord at Oathall, a captain of the truth, a bold soldier of Jesus Christ. God has thrown down before him the middle wall of bigotry, and he boldly launches into an irregular usefulness. For some months he has exhorted his dragoons daily; for some weeks he has preached publicly at Leicester in the Methodist meeting house, in his regiments, to numerous congregations, with success. The stiff regular ones pursue him with hue and cry, but I believe he is quite beyond

their reach. God keeps him zealous and simple? I believe this *red coat* will shame many a *black* one. I am sure he shames me."

Whitefield told the story, in his Tabernacle pulpit, of Captain Scott's conversion and labors, and added: "I have invited the captain to come to London, and bring his artillery to Tabernacle rampart, and try what execution he can do here."

After a while the captain left the army and gave himself wholly to the work of the ministry, in which he was eminently popular and useful. He was one of the supplies of the "Tabernacle" for twenty years.

The other example of the power of Divine grace, in this place, is still more remarkable. An old soldier by the name of Abraham, who had retired from the army, was living in the neighborhood. He was now *one hundred years old*, and the Spirit of God awakened him to a concern for his eternal salvation. He wandered about from church to church, desiring to learn what he should do to be saved. Being

prejudiced against the “Methodists,” he for some time, avoided Oathall Chapel. But not finding what he sought elsewhere, he was constrained to go and hear Mr. Venn, who was to preach that morning. He listened, and his awakened mind received the word with joy. As soon as the service was ended, he exclaimed to a friend, with much emotion: “Ah, neighbor, this is the very truth of God’s word which I have been seeking; I never heard it so plain before. Here will I abide.” He soon found peace in believing. He walked humbly with God, often remarking, “I am a child born at a hundred years old.” His age and white head made him a distinguished object in the house of God, where he was a constant attendant.

Abraham had his trials in the divine life. His wife opposed him “a bit.” But one day a terrible tempest came down upon their humble dwelling, and the poor woman, thinking the day of judgment had come, fell upon her knees, exclaiming, “O, Abraham, pray for me!

ar'n't you afraid? it's the day of judgment!" "Afraid?" replied Abraham, "no; if it is the day of judgment, then I *now* shall see my Lord!" and his rapturous feelings burst forth in a hymn of praise. Abraham died in the hundred and sixth year of his age; "a brand plucked from the fire."

On one occasion the countess wrote a pressing note to Mr. Berridge, to leave his parish and supply for a time at Oathall and some of her other chapels. To this invitation he returned a refusal in the following original, eccentric, and certainly very impressive manner. It exhibits the genius of the man more than a labored chapter of description: "As for myself, I am determined not to quit my charge in a hurry. Never do I leave my bees, though for a short space only, but at my return I find them either cutting and colting, or fighting and robbing each other; not gathering honey from every flower in God's garden, but filling the air with their buzzings, and darting out the venom of their little hearts in their fiery stings. Nay, so

inflamed they often are, (and a mighty little thing disturbs them,) that three months tinkling afterward with a warming pan, will scarce hive them at last, and make them settle to work again. They are now in a mighty ferment, occasioned by a *Welsh Dyer*,\* who has done me the same kind office at Everton that he has done my friend at Tottenham. 'Tis a pity he should have the charge of anything but *wasps*; these he might allure into the treacle pot, and step in before them himself, but he will never fill a hive with honey."

*Tunbridge Wells*, a village of the town of Tunbridge, about thirty miles from London, was one of the next scenes of Lady Huntingdon's benevolent labors. The springs of Tunbridge Wells being famous for their health-restoring qualities, it was the resort, from April to November, of not only the sick, but of the fashionable and worldly. The permanent inhabitants were notorious for their ignorance and irreligion. The Sabbath was openly pro-

\* Rev. G. Dyer.

faned, and other outbreaking sins abounded. Mr. Wesley had, at times, visited it with his stirring appeals. During a short residence there, Lady Huntingdon was visited by two young men, who were *preparing* for the ministry, but had never preached publicly. Being pressed with a desire to do the people good, her ladyship, without mentioning the fact to the young men, sent round a messenger to tell the people that on such an evening there would be preaching *in front of her residence*. When the time came, a multitude assembled. The young men inquired what it meant. "Why," answered the countess, "having two preachers with me, I have made an appointment for preaching, and one of you must preach." They began to excuse themselves, but she put a Bible into the hands of the one whom she knew to be a ready speaker, and pleasantly thrust him out of the door, saying: "Go, do the best you can, or tell the people you are afraid to trust God for a message. Go; the Lord be with you; do the best you can."

Encouraged by the success God gave his word, her ladyship sent for more experienced laborers. Mr. Venn came, and she encouraged him to commence his efforts by a sermon in the open air, instead of occupying the Presbyterian church, which had been used by Mr. Wesley. While the speaker was urging the invitation, “Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden,” one of his hearers dropped down and instantly expired. The preacher and the people were greatly moved by this solemn visitation from God. Many seemed resolved to flee the wrath to come, and lingered around the place of worship after the service closed. So intense was the feeling that it was renewed again by words of exhortation, the Holy Ghost meeting many hearts.

The erection of a chapel by the countess followed these tokens of the Divine favor, and Tunbridge Wells became “a regular appointment for her itinerants, where many souls were from time to time ‘added to the Lord.’”

Bath, in Somersetshire, on the banks of the

Avon, one hundred and five miles from London, is one of the places of resort, during the summer months, of the rich and gay. Here, also, the sick came to drink its healing waters. In the middle of the last century its people were almost wholly given up to the allurements of sin. Those who sought pleasure here, regarded a worldly religion only, and the poor could well say, "No man careth for our souls."

For twenty-five years Lady Huntingdon had been visiting and sowing precious seed in Bath, in her private intercourse with the people. In 1765 she erected a moderate sized chapel, but beautiful in architecture and furnishing. Some of its accommodations seem, to our views of propriety in the house of God, very strange, but we must remember how different were the people and their customs at that time, from what they are now.

This chapel had elevated seats apart from the rest of the congregation, for the ladies of nobility. Behind a curtain, and concealed from the view of the audience, were other seats.

These were occupied by *the great*, whose curiosity led them to the chapel, but who did not wish to be seen *there*. Here they could *hear*, and avoid the reproach which they might have incurred in being seen in what was commonly called the “Methodist” meeting. Behind this curtain some of the *bishops* often sat.

A witty lady of the nobility, who was active in introducing their lordships to the chapel in this sly manner, called it “Nicodemus corner.”

But large numbers of the aristocracy openly attended upon the heart-searching preaching of this chapel. The “mighty men of God” generally occupied the pulpit. Charles Wesley, Whitefield, Venn, and Madan were frequently here. Fletcher won some of his freshest laurels for his eloquent and soul-saving appeals within its walls.

John Wesley having offered to supply for a time at Bath, Lady Huntingdon thus replies, in a letter dated September, 1766 :

“I am most highly obliged by your kind

offer of serving the chapel at Bath during your stay at Bristol; I mean on Sundays. It is a most important time, being the height of the latter season, when the great of this world are only in the reach of the sound of the Gospel from that quarter. The mornings are their time, the evenings the inhabitants' time chiefly. I do trust that this union which is commenced, will be for the furtherance of our faith and mutual love to each other. It is for the interest of the best of causes that we should all be found, first faithful to the Lord, and then to each other. I find something wanting, and that is a meeting now and then, agreed upon, that you, your brother, Mr. Whitefield, and I should be glad regularly to communicate our observations upon the general state of the work. Light might follow, and it would be a kind of guide to me, as I am connected with many."

Horace Walpole, who heard Wesley preach in the Huntingdon Chapel at Bath at this time, says: "They have boys and girls with charming voices, who sing hymns. The chapel is very

neat, with *true* Gothic windows. . . . Wesley is a clean, elderly man, fresh colored, his hair smoothly combed. He is wondrous clever." Wesley himself, speaking of his preaching here, says: "I know not when I have seen a more serious or more deeply attentive congregation. Is it possible? Can the Gospel have place where Satan's throne is?" In the hearts of many it found a welcome place.

Though often enlarged and beautified, this chapel still remains, and has ever been honored of God.

The history of Methodism in Bristol was alluded to in the early part of our narrative. Here Whitefield and Wesley began to preach in the fields. In this place each had flourishing societies at an early period of their career. Whitefield's Bristol "Tabernacle," at the time of his death, was crowded with serious worshipers. A few years later, in 1775, Lady Huntingdon looked around for a house for another congregation. In a distant part of the town a large assembly-room was found, then

used occasionally as a theater. This she leased for \$200 a year, and fitted it for preaching by expending \$4,000. Upon this new "tabernacle" the pillar of the Divine presence rested. Under its fostering influence some distinguished *lay preachers* were raised up to bless the Church.

From the assembly-room of Bristol, Lady Huntingdon turned her attention to a spacious theater of the great city of Birmingham. Some of her young men had been preaching in a less conspicuous place, and a small chapel had been built. She purchased the play-house, and appointed to it the Rev. Mr. Bradford, whose faithful preaching had just caused the churches to be shut against him. He was very popular, and great crowds attended. His appearance "on the stage" is thus described:

"When the play-house was first purchased by Lady Huntingdon, a pulpit was erected upon the part of the stage in which Mr. Bradford used to preach. The people went into the boxes, pit, and gallery to hear him, and also

upon the stage. It was generally full, sometimes crowded. The people heard with great attention, and when anything was spoken by Mr. Bradford which they approved, they immediately clapped hands for a short time, as at a play. Mr. Bradford held his peace till they had done, and then proceeded as calmly as if nothing had happened. This was repeated several times during the discourse. This practice continued a short time, until the people became more serious, and the place was properly changed into a meeting-house."

We have thus glanced at some of the larger and most important of the chapels of the countess. Many others, where great good was done, were scattered over England. We shall notice under a distinct head her later and boldest enterprises in London.

But it must be remembered that she sustained preaching in many destitute places, not furnished with permanent houses of worship. Like a skillful general, she annoyed the enemy by her soldiers, wherever and whenever she could.

The chapels we have named were *centers* from which went forth a wide-spread Gospel influence, to awaken and convert the people.

We shall next glance at this eminent and God-honored woman from another point of observation.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS.

FOR about thirty years Lady Huntingdon had been laboring to save souls. We have seen her the proprietor of a large number of chapels, and the director, in the providence of God, of many Gospel ministers. As her Connection extended, and the cry of “irregularity” increased, the settled clergy became less willing to supply the urgent demand for ministers. A few, such as we have introduced to the reader, were ready, both in good and evil report, to preach whenever a door of usefulness opened; but what were they to the abundance of the harvest! Some lay preachers and exhorters had been employed from the first, but now, as the wants of the work called them into wider and more responsible fields, some provision for their education was deemed necessary.

During the year 1767 the countess had resolved on a plan for a college for this purpose. She consulted Wesley, Fletcher, Romaine, and others, who approved of the project. All agreed that no student should be received who did not give good evidence of conversion, and a call by the Holy Ghost to the ministry, and that, while such might remain three years to complete the course of study, they should be at liberty to go out any time, as their convictions of duty, under the guidance of Providence, should dictate. It was further provided, that when they left the college they should join any evangelical Protestant ministry which they should choose.

Having thus conceived the plan, the location and pecuniary means became subjects of inquiry. To answer the question concerning a location, the attention of her ladyship was immediately turned toward Wales. To appreciate the reason for this, it will be necessary to pause for a moment, and notice the interesting circumstances of her early acquaintance with

the spiritual wants of that country, and her labors for it.

In 1748 she made a three weeks' tour through Wales, with Lady Ann and Lady Frances Hastings, accompanied by several of her preachers. They halted in every considerable town and village, and the ministers of their itinerating party collected together large congregations of attentive hearers. When access was given to the churches or public houses, they were thankfully used; but when these were denied, or were too small for the multitude, they turned to the street and fields. Having reached South Wales, they tarried several days at Trevecca. While there they had preaching four or five times a day to immense multitudes gathered from all the adjacent country.

On one occasion the preacher was dwelling upon the text, “What shall I cry?” when loud and bitter cries were uttered in every part of the congregation.

Lady Huntingdon, after the sermon was

ended, conversed with as many as possible of these awakened persons. She rejoiced to find evidence that the outcry arose from genuine conviction for sin. The general expression was, "I see my guilt before God so clearly, and feel it to be so great, that I am afraid there can be no mercy."

"It was remarkable," wrote Lady Frances, "that as sinners were under a most distressing sense of their guilt, so the people of God were sensibly refreshed and comforted. Their souls magnified the Lord, and rejoiced in God their Saviour."

On returning to England Lady Huntingdon makes the following record of her emotions: "On a review of all I have seen and heard within the last few weeks, I am constrained to exclaim: 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name.' The sermons were in general lively and awakening, containing the most solemn and awful truths; such as the utter ruin of man by the fall, and his redemption and recovery by Jesus

Christ, the energetic declaration of which produced great and visible effects in many. I inquired the meaning of the outcry which sometimes spread through the congregation, and when informed that it arose from a deep conviction for sin, working powerfully on the awakened conscience, I could not but acknowledge, '*This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.*' The field thus effectually opened in Wales, was successfully cultivated up to the period of the projected Theological School.

At Trevecca, in the parish of Talgarth, Brecknockshire, South Wales, where the word of God, in the preaching just alluded to, was wonderfully blessed, stood an ancient and venerable-looking structure. It was a part of an old castle. The tablet over the door bore the date of 1176. To purchase this and support the school, Lady Huntingdon exhausted all her pecuniary resources. A generous friend, Mr. Thornton, made two donations of twenty-five hundred dollars each.

Lady Glenorchy, Lady Chesterfield, and a few kindred spirits, combined their efforts and gave another five thousand dollars.

Thus provided with the location, the building, and the money, the countess wrote to Fletcher, among others, inclosing a plan of the terms of admission, etc., and requested him to recommend, if he had occasion, candidates from his parish. The reply is interesting, as it contains the early history of the *first* student of the institution, and an illustration of the *class* of young men of which it was mostly composed.

MADELEY, November 24th, 1767.

“MY DEAR LADY,—I have received the proposal which your ladyship has drawn up for the examination of the young men who may appear proper candidates for the Trevecca academy, and gratefully acknowledge your kindness in allowing me to propose suitable subjects out of my parish. Our Israel is small, my lady, and if, among six hundred thousand, only two faithful men were found of old, the

Joshuas and Calebs cannot be numerous among us. After having perused the articles, and looked round about me, I designed to answer your ladyship, that *out of this Galilee ariseth no prophet*. With this resolution I went to bed, but in my sleep was much taken up with the thought and remembrance of one of my young colliers, who told me some months ago, that for four years he had been inwardly persuaded he should be called to speak for God. I looked upon the unusual impression of my dream as a call to speak to the young man, and at waking designed to do it at the first opportunity. To my great surprise, he came to Madeley that very morning, and I found, upon inquiry, that he had been as much drawn to come, as I to speak to him. After conversing with him, I was satisfied that I might venture to propose him to your ladyship for further examination. His name is *James Gleazehook*, collier and getter of iron-stone in Madeley woods. He is now twenty-three, by look nineteen. He has been awakened

seven years. He has been steady from the beginning of his profession, at least so far as to be kept outwardly unblamable, but seemed to me to walk mostly in heaviness. What I told him was as oil put into a glimmering lamp, and he seemed to revive upon hearing of this little outward call. Notwithstanding his strong desire to exhort, he never attempted it yet, and his not being forward to run of himself, makes me have the better hope his call is from God. He hath no mean gift in singing and prayer, his judgment and sense are superior to his station, and he does not seem to be discouraged by the severest part of your ladyship's proposals.

“J. FLETCHER.”

Having thus expressed his approbation of the plan of the school, and introduced into it the first student, Fletcher was invited to become its president, or head master. This he reluctantly consented to do. He continued to discharge all his duties to his parish at Madeley, and resided there most of the time.

He visited Trevecca frequently, took the general directing of the course of study pursued, examined the candidates for admission, and, more especially, excited in the students an earnest seeking for that elevated piety required of a minister of Christ. These duties added much to his labors and sacrifices; yet he did it without pecuniary reward. It was the willing offering of a deep interest in his younger brethren in the work of the gospel.

The Rev. Joseph Easterbrooks was chosen assistant master. Of him Fletcher thus speaks: “He hath good parts, a most happy memory, and a zeal that would gladden your ladyship’s heart. He has preached no less than four times to-day, and seems, indeed, in his own element when he is seeking after the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He is employed every evening in the week for the Lord. I give him the more opportunity to exercise his talent, as it appears he does it far better than I. I beg two things for him: first, that it may hold; second, that he may be kept humble. He

would, at first, live upon potatoes and water, but, finding it may impair his health, I have got him to table with me, and shall gladly pay his board."

Thus far everything seemed to encourage the countess in this enterprise. Her friends and eminent co-laborers generally approved of it. But some feared its influence would not be favorable upon the simplicity and spirituality of the youthful ministers. Her old friend, the vicar of Everton, sent her the following protest :

"The soil you have chosen is proper. Welsh mountains afford a brisk air for a student, and the rules are excellent. But I doubt the success of the project, and fear it will occasion you more trouble than all your undertakings besides. Are we commanded to make laborers, or to pray the Lord to send laborers ? Will not Jesus choose, and teach, and send forth his ministering servants now, as he did his disciples aforetime ; and glean them up when and where he pleaseth ? The world says, No ; be-

cause they are strangers to a Divine commission and a Divine teaching. And what if these asses blunder about the Master's meaning for a time, and mistake it often, as they did formerly? No great harm will ensue, provided they are kept from paper and ink, or from a white wall and charcoal. Do you like to see tame lambs in a house and sucking with a finger, or to view them skipping after the dam in their own proper pasture?

“We read of a school of prophets in Scripture, but we do not read that it was of God's appointment. Elijah visited the school, which was at Bethel, and seems to have been fond of it; yet the Lord commanded him to fetch a successor, not from the school, but, as the Romans fetched a dictator, from the plow. Are we told of a single *preaching* prophet that was taken out of this school? or do we find any public employment given the scholars, except one, sending a light-heeled young man, when light heels were needful, with a horn of oil to anoint Jehu? (2 Kings ix.) That old prophet

who told a sad lie to another prophet, was of this school, and might be the master of this college, for he was a gray-headed man. (1 Kings xiii, 11.)

“While my heart is thus prattling to you very simply, like a child, it stands in no fear of offending you; and if your project be right, the Master will keep you steadfast, and you will only smile at my prattling. Indeed, I am the most dubious man in the world about my own judgment, and will stickle for nothing, except to live and to trust in my Lord

“JOHN BERRIDGE.”

Students, however, flocked to the school, and the spirit of Scriptural holiness pervaded the institution, under the promptings of the eminent Christian experience of their president. There seems to have been almost daily preaching, and multitudes attended upon the word, and were converted. The spirit of revival was unceasing.

On the 24th of August, 1769, the first anniversary of the opening of the college was

celebrated. As some of the eminent laborers of the Connection arrived at Trevecca several days previous to that time, they immediately commenced preaching in the court in front of the chapel. The concourse of people was immense. Many were awakened under the sermons, exhortations, and prayers. They were days of preparation for the feast of the twenty-fourth, a “protracted meeting” of great power. Early on the morning of the anniversary the Lord’s Supper was administered in the chapel by Mr. Wesley and Mr. Shirley. The clergymen first partook, then the students, afterward Lady Huntingdon and the noblewomen of her train. At ten o’clock Fletcher preached in the chapel court. Mr. Willing followed, preaching in Welsh, and continued the service until two o’clock. The clergymen then dined with Lady Huntingdon, and baskets of bread and meat were distributed to the crowd without, who waited for the still further breaking to them of the bread of life. At three o’clock Wesley preached, and Fletcher followed with

another sermon, holding the deeply interested congregation until five o'clock.

In the evening a love-feast was held. Howel Harris and many of his Welsh converts were present. The great and the lowly met together. The learned, but humble divine, and the pious, but unlearned exhorter, were of one spirit. The great theme of all was, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which bringeth salvation."

On the following day Wesley set off for Bristol; but Fletcher, Shirley, and other preachers remained several days, preaching from the scaffold in the court, and promoting the work of God in public and private, which was going on so wonderfully among the people.

In the spring of 1770, Joseph Benson, subsequently a distinguished Wesleyan commentator, was appointed head master of the Trevecca College, on a salary of about equal to one hundred and twenty-five dollars a year, with board and washing. He was recommended for this position by Wesley and Fletcher. He had, some years previous, been classical teacher of

Mr. Wesley's school at Kingswood. He was at once respected for his attainments, talents, and piety. But Fletcher, who visited the school frequently, was its *Elijah*. Mr. Benson records, in his after years, his recollection of these interviews in glowing lines. He says: "My heart kindles while I write. Here it was that I saw, shall I say, an angel in human flesh? I should not far exceed the truth if I said so. But here I saw a descendant of fallen Adam so fully raised above the ruins of the fall, that though by the body he was tied down to the earth, yet was his whole *conversation in heaven*; yet was his life, from day to day, *hid with Christ in God*. Prayer, praise, love, and zeal, all ardent, elevated above what one would think attainable in this state of frailty, were the elements in which he continually lived. And as to others, his continual employment was to call, entreat, and urge the students to ascend with him to the glorious *Source* of being and blessedness."

All study was laid aside when he appeared

in the school-room. Latin and Greek had no attractions when he was present. Even the study of divinity became uninteresting, if he was expected to speak. His full heart would not suffer him to be silent, and his burning words commanded profound attention. The students seldom listened long to his appeals before their eyes were suffused with tears, and their hearts melted. His theme ever was, *the fullness of the Holy Ghost* in the heart of the believer. He would close these addresses in the school-room by saying: "As many of you as are athirst for this fullness of the Spirit follow me into my room." Generally, he would be followed by many. Two or three hours were then spent in wrestling prayer. The spirit of Fletcher, in the midst of these supplications, seemed too full of the love of God for his mortal frame. All would retire feeling that they had been on the mount of God."

In his private interviews with the students, and the families connected with the school, it is remarked that "his manner was so solemn,

and at the same time so mild and insinuating, that it was hardly possible for any one who had the happiness of being in his company not to be struck with awe, and charmed with love, as if in the presence of an angel."

When unable to be present at Trevecca, on account of the duties of his parish, Fletcher wrote to the students in the same paternal and spiritual strain with which he addressed them when in their assembly room.

A theological school, with such a head, could not easily become formal. A holy unction rested upon its preachers, as they were scattered over the three kingdoms, calling sinners to Christ.

On the return of the anniversary of the college, Trevecca was again made the favored place of numerous conversions. The public service began at six o'clock in the morning, with a prayer-meeting, followed by the administration of the Lord's Supper. With but short intervals, it was continued until late in the evening. Among the preachers of the occasion

was the warm-hearted Berridge. The godly simplicity which pervaded the school, and the success which attended the labors of its young men, had overcome his prejudices. It now received his cordial approval and support.

From the time of the establishment of her "School of the Prophets," Lady Huntingdon had her principal residence at Trevecca. It continued, during her life, to flourish under her supervision and munificence. After her death it was removed to Cheshunt, Hertfordshire, England. Anticipating this event, she provided in her will for the removal of the furniture, library, and communion-plate, to that place. It was a new location, but the same institution in design and spirit. It remains to the present day "*a school of the prophets.*"

## CHAPTER IX.

## HATED FOR CHRIST'S SAKE.

THE work of God in saving souls was now progressing gloriously. It had not only called forth the “mighty men of God” who stood in the front of the battle, and the younger men of less note who came from “the school of the prophets,” but its necessities were continually thrusting valiant recruits into the same ranks, immediately from the common business of life. Thus the conflict with the kingdom of darkness was maintained vigorously, and victories gained on every side. The countess must now be viewed as fully established “as a standard-bearer,” hastening, with the army God had placed under her command, to whatever position on the field of contest, the cause for which she contended seemed to require.

It would have been strange if, while God's

people were fighting so successfully, the devil should have provoked no opposition. If the world had not hated both them and their work, then would the servants have been above their Lord. But they fully learned that "to them it was given, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but to suffer for his sake." Some of the evidence of this we shall briefly notice.

The persecutions which Whitefield and the Wesleys suffered are well known. We shall only allude to some instances which are more or less connected with the scenes of our narrative. We shall survey briefly the experience of the countess and her fellow-laborers, while in contact with the foes of Christ. Their patient endurance of reproach, and their love toward their enemies, will exhibit still more fully their Christian character, and be new occasion for our admiration and praise for the power of our holy religion.

It might be expected that Lady Huntingdon's piety would first provoke to opposition

the great of her own circles. We should naturally expect that it would be manifest in a manner peculiar to the refinement of the persecutors and the commanding position of the persecuted. The unsanctified heart is ever the same, but the form of its expression differs.

Soon after her conversion the countess was at Bath with her husband. Dr. Warburton, afterward the distinguished Bishop of Gloucester, was there, and was much in her company. He had learned that she was "tainted with Methodism," and with rudeness attacked her sentiments, and ridiculed her experience, stigmatizing her claim of a Divine witness of the Spirit upon the heart as "rank enthusiasm." He found in her a witness of this truth who was both able and willing to give "a reason of the hope that was in her." His opposition and unconcealed contempt for evangelical truth, only gave it more notoriety in the fashionable circles of Bath, and, as we have seen, it prevailed mightily.

After the countess had chosen the people of God for her associates, her absence from court was, of course, a subject of remark. “Where is Lady Huntingdon,” inquired the Prince of Wales, on one occasion, of Lady Charlotte Edwin, “that she seldom visits our circles?”

“I suppose praying with her beggars,” exclaimed the lady of fashion, with a sneer. The prince did not, however, reciprocate this reproach of his old acquaintance. He shook his head reprovingly, and remarked: “Lady Charlotte, when I am dying, I think I shall be happy to seize the skirt of Lady Huntingdon’s mantle to lift me up with her to heaven.”

Many such little annoyances did this good woman experience. But she was made glad by the conversion of many who at first reviled her, among whom was this same Lady Edwin.

The opposition from the lower class toward her assumed its usual form. She says: “Our affronts and persecutions for the word’s sake are hardly to be described. . . . Many secret

and shameful enemies of the Gospel, by God's will, appear. The particulars would amuse you, and, blessed be God, they rejoice me, as good must follow it. They call out in the open street for me, saying, if they had me they would tear me in pieces. But this does but prove that it is the Lord that offends them, and so must he continue to the unregenerate heart."

While this opposition was directed at her personally, the countess was silent and unmoved, except in pity and love toward her enemies. But when it assumed a form which threatened to embarrass the work of God, she was aroused to repel it by every Christian means.

It will be remembered by some of our readers, that, in the middle of the last century, "the Pretender," as he was called, greatly disturbed the peace of England. He was the grandson of King James, and claimed a right to be King of England. He raised a small army, landed in Scotland, and endeavored to fight his way to the throne. He was a Roman Catholic, and he

and his family were greatly disliked by the English people. If, therefore, wicked persons wished to stir up the mob against any party or individual persons, they would, if possible, show that they were friends of the Pretender. They tried to do this often, by the most evident lies. Such representations, if believed, excited the jealousy and opposition of the *reigning* king and his government.

The enemies of Methodism showed their hatred in this way. They reported that Mr. Wesley was a papist, if not a Jesuit. They said he kept popish priests in his house. They had no doubt, they affirmed, that he received large sums of money from Catholic countries, and when the Pretender landed, he would join him, with his followers. Sometimes it was said that the king had put him in prison for high treason, and some declared that he had been seen in France with the Pretender.

All this sounds very foolish to us, but thousands believed it, and it hindered Wesley's usefulness. The magistrate at Surrey required him

to sign the declaration against Popery, which he did willingly. He even did more. He drew up an address, in his own name, and in the name of his people, to the king, declaring his attachment to him, to his family, and to the Church of England.

Although Lady Huntingdon was so well known, and was a distant relative of George the king, she was slandered in the same way. She only smiled at this, until the ignorant people who believed it, on that account beat some of her preachers. Even the justices of the peace refused to interfere in their behalf, when they were ill-treated and their property destroyed. Moved at this, she appealed to the king. She demanded protection for her people, through the magistrates, and she obtained it. The king answered her letter, and reproved those who had persecuted her preachers.

But the most painful opposition which the countess and her friends were called to endure, was that which came from those who professed to be the followers of Christ. At the time when

she was sitting, as a young convert, under the consoling preaching of Whitefield, Lavington, then just made Bishop of Exeter, delivered a charge to his clergy. The bishop was a bitter opposer of the Methodist reformers; but some mischievous persons published what they falsely represented as his address to his ministers, in which were Methodist sentiments. This was shown to the bishop, and he was informed that Whitefield had thus imposed upon him and the public, reflecting also upon the Wesleys as partners in the fraud. Without carefully inquiring into the truth of a charge so evidently false, the bishop published a denial of the sentiments attributed to him, and charged the Methodist leaders with the authorship of the forged address. This denunciation of Methodism and its leaders obtained a wide circulation, and coming from a learned and distinguished bishop, awakened a great cry, and prejudiced many pious people against them and the work of God in which they were engaged. The bishop was fully and

emphatically assured that he had mistaken the authors of the false publication; yet he had not the candor to acquit those whom he had accused, though he had not attempted to prove the charge. Feeling jealous for the reputation and usefulness of good men, Lady Huntingdon here interposed. She wrote to the bishop, inclosing a letter from the printer of the imposition, who certified that he obtained the manuscript from one entirely unconnected with the Methodists, and that its publication was *solely* his deed. On the authority of this declaration the countess demanded of the bishop an acknowledgment that Whitefield and the Wesleys had been wronged in the affair. But the haughty prelate left her letter unanswered. She was not, however, to be thus contemptuously repelled. She wrote him again a spirited note, saying that if he did not make the acknowledgment, she should publicly expose him. This brought the following confession :

“The Bishop of Exeter, having received the

most positive assurances from the Countess of Huntingdon, and other respectable sources, that neither Mr. Whitefield nor Mr. Wesley, nor any one in connection with or authorized by them, had any concern in the fabrication and publication of a charge said to be delivered by him to the clergy of his diocese, takes this opportunity of apologizing to her ladyship and Messrs. Whitefield and Wesley, for the harsh and unjust censures which he was led to pass on them, from the supposition that they were in some measure concerned in, or had countenanced the late imposition on the public.

“The Bishop of Exeter feels that it is imperative on him to make this concession to the Countess of Huntingdon ; and requests her ladyship and Messrs Whitefield and Wesley will accept his unfeigned regret at having unjustly wounded their feelings, and exposed them to the odium of the world.”

This was sent by the bishop to the countess as a private note. He expected it would be

used only as such. But her ladyship rightly judged that, as he had exposed the accused “to the odium of the world,” the world should read the confession; she therefore published it. The anger of the bishop at this was intense, and he persisted in reviling the Methodist ladies, and the woman who had wrung from him this reluctant, humiliating, but just recantation.

A few years after this affair, and the progress of the reformation, Whitefield established preaching among the destitute in the West End of London. But a storm of opposition assailed him. A mob, with a copper furnace, bells, drums, clappers, and other instruments of discord, confusion, and merriment for the vulgar, raised a loud din the moment he began to speak, and continued it until he closed. The serious were insulted in passing to and from the congregation. The chapel windows were broken, and some of the congregation were injured by dangerous missiles. These abuses by the low and ignorant were encour-

aged by the officers of the church, in which he had been permitted to preach. Thus annoyed, Lady Huntingdon appealed, in connection with Whitefield, to the highest authorities of the government. While tardy justice was being awarded, the work of God went on, in spite of the rage of men, and *Tottenham Court Chapel*, of which we have spoken, was erected, and continued to open its doors to a large congregation, saved by the agency of an opposed and reviled ministry.

Failing in these open attacks, the enemy tried the power of mimicry and ridicule. The celebrated actor, Foote, was employed to exhibit in burlesque Whitefield's manner and sentiments, on the stage of Drury Lane Theater. For the purpose of obtaining materials to do so, he attended the services of the chapel of Tottenham Court. The profane exhibition attracted, for a while, great crowds.

The well-known comedian, Shuter, was at one time sitting under Whitefield's preaching. He was, at this time, exciting great applause

on the stage, in the character of "*Ramble*." Whether he had come to Tottenham Court from mere curiosity, or for the purpose which caused the attendance of Foote, we do not know. As he sat directly opposite the preacher, he could feel the entire force of his eloquence. In the full glow of an appeal to sinners to come to Christ, Whitefield fixed his piercing gaze upon Shuter, and exclaimed, in a voice that thrilled every hearer: "And thou, poor *Ramble*, who hast long rambled from him, come thou also. O, end thy ramblings by coming to Jesus."

The poor comedian was greatly affected. He waited upon Whitefield in private, and complained that he had been so singled out in the congregation. "I thought I should have fainted," he murmured; "how could you serve me so?"

In Wales, the zealous and eloquent Howell Harris preached amid much opposition. The poor people, who gladly attended his ministry, were impoverished by fines. Harris was nearly

stunned, at one time, by a blow upon the head. "The gentlemen (!)" he says, "hunt us like partridges."

He met the people at *midnight*, or very early in the morning, to avoid the mob. Many of the magistrates, greatly encouraged the malice of the low and ignorant, by the readiness with which they fined the Methodists, on their unjust complaints.

Howel Harris entered a village, at one time, to preach. The rumor of his coming had gone before him. The magistrate, believing, from common report, that he was a pestilent fellow, prepared himself with the Riot Act, with which to disperse the congregation, and authority to arrest the preacher. "But," said he, "I will hear him myself, before I commit him." So making one of the congregation, he heard Harris through. He was filled with surprise and pleasure. Instead of an incendiary, as his enemies represented, he seemed to him an apostle. He approached him with a friendly hand. He begged his pardon for

having indulged the purpose of arresting him, and took him, to the astonishment of the crowd, to the hospitalities of his own house. This excellent man, Marmaduke Gwynne, Esq., became afterward the father-in-law of Charles Wesley. This was the beginning of a long and friendly intercourse with the itinerant preachers.

The intrepid Grimshaw generally preached without molestation. He was bold and uncompromising, and his dauntless bearing often awed his enemies. But at one time he was preaching near Colne, in Lancashire. In the midst of his discourse, the minister of the parish, the Rev. George White, rushed furiously into the house. A mob of aids followed close behind. He scattered the frightened worshipers, and demanded of Grimshaw a promise not to come into his parish again. This was boldly refused. The mob then dragged him, amid fiendish cries, and a shower of stones and mud, to the village tavern, where, after some detention by the vicar, he was released. Determined not to yield a plain right

to preach Christ where he pleased, Grimshaw soon appeared again in the parish of the opposing vicar, accompanied by Wesley. The latter had only well commenced his discourse, when the mob from Colne poured in upon them. The preachers were escorted, by a drunken rabble, to a magistrate. They were required to promise to preach there no more. "That," they replied, "we shall never do." After some words they were dismissed. In attempting to leave the house, Mr. Wesley was beaten to the ground, and all his friends were assailed with stones and mud. Some were dragged by the hair along the road. One man was forced to leap from a rock ten or twelve feet high into a river. He arose, bruised and faint, and attempted to crawl out, but was thrust back. He scarcely escaped with his life, and died soon after from the effects of his ill treatment.

The vicar was accustomed to rally these furious persecutors by the beat of a drum in the public square, having put up the following

notice or “proclamation:” “Notice is hereby given, if any man be mindful to enlist in his majesty’s service, under the command of the Rev. George White, commander-in-chief, and John Bannister, lieutenant-general of his majesty’s forces for the defense of the Church of England, and the support of the manufactory in and about Colne, both which are now in danger, let him repair to the drum-head at the Cross, where each man shall receive a pint of ale in advance, and all other proper encouragement.”

While such opposition was manifested in retired parishes of England, the same hatred to an earnest piety was shown in high places of influence.

About the time that Lady Huntingdon established her school at Trevecca, a band of young men in Oxford College had caught the fire of the reformation. Following the example of Wesley and the first Methodists, they met frequently for prayer. They gave alms to the poor, labored privately for the salvation of men,

and some of them dared to preach in barns and by the way-side. Complaints were entered against them to the heads of the University, and they were expelled. Some of the charges would excite a smile, if they did not evidence something more on the part of the persecutors than mere ignorance of religious things. They were prompted by intense hatred of the simple truth of the Gospel.

One was charged with having been instructed by Mr. Fletcher, a declared Methodist, and with associating with Methodists. It was said that they had been "*indiscreetly admitted into the University on the recommendation of Lady Huntingdon,*" and that they were, or had been, "London tradesmen, tapsters, barbers, etc." It was true they were young men whom the grace of God had found in the common walks of life. Having obtained a hope through grace, they were seeking to extend their usefulness, by increasing their knowledge. They had carried their religion to college, and that they maintained it there, is further evident by the

declaration of their enemies in announcing their expulsion, that they were excluded “for holding Methodistical tenets, and taking upon them to pray, read and expound the Scriptures, and singing hymns in private houses.” Their moral and religious characters were not called in question. It was very pertinently remarked, by an observer of this transaction, that since they had condemned some for having *too much* religion, it would be well to inquire into the conduct of those who had *too little*.

Lady Huntingdon, true to her religious profession and character, came to the rescue of these wronged young men. Some entered the school at Trevecca. They preached under her patronage, and were saved to the Church as useful men. Of course she suffered bitter reproaches for this from many in influence and power. She was spoken evil of in this case, for Christ’s sake and the Gospel’s.

It is not strange, perhaps, that hatred of the countess by the wicked proceeded so far at one time as to result in a plot to take her life.

Her influence against Roman Catholicism had been very great. The papists rightly looked upon the Methodist revival as a new and powerful enemy. They would, therefore, gladly be rid of its leaders.

The countess, near the close of life, became acquainted with a Lord Douglas, a Scotch nobleman who had long resided at Brussels and become an ardent Catholic. He professed to the countess to have become convinced of the errors of papacy, and espoused warmly her religious sentiments. He returned to Brussels, and after some years, in his correspondence with her, he stated that there seemed to be an opening of usefulness for her in that country. He urged her to come and establish the pure Gospel, and promised her his influence and his aid to her labors.

Such a representation was likely to affect her. She made immediate arrangements for the new enterprise. The day was appointed on which she, with one of her ministers, was to leave London for Brussels. Many little unforeseen

hinderances, however, occurred, and she was delayed a few days in that city. During this time the most authentic assurances came from Brussels of a plot to take her life, in which Lord Douglas was the prime mover. His recantation of popery had been feigned. He thought to do God service by the death of a heretic. But God arrests him in the midst of his evil designs. On the very day that the countess left Wales to embark at London for Brussels, Lord Douglas, then in excellent health, dropped down and instantly expired. Surely “God brings to naught the counsels of the wicked.”

One of the most fruitless persecutions upon which the enemies of the spread of pure religion ever entered, was the attempt to stop the itinerant labors of the intrepid Berridge.

Soon after he began to preach at Everton the churches in the neighborhood were deserted, and his was crowded. This offended the deserted parsons. The squire of his own parish was also angry, because, he said, he hated to

be incommoded, and disliked strangers. These dissatisfied persons, therefore, joined together and complained of Berridge's "irregularities," as they called his earnest and frequent preaching, and he was summoned before his bishop, when the following conversation occurred :

*Bishop.*—" Well, Berridge, did I institute you to Eaton or Potten? Why do you go preaching out of your parish?"

*Berridge.*—" My lord, I make no claims to the living of those parishes; 'tis true, I was once at Eaton, and finding a few poor people assembled, I admonished them to repent of their sins, and to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation of their souls. At that very moment, my lord, there were five or six clergymen out of their own parishes, and enjoying themselves on the Eaton bowling green."

*Bishop*, (sharply.)—" I tell you that if you continue preaching where you have no right, you will very likely be sent to Huntingdon jail."

*Berridge.*—" I have no more desire, my

lord, for a jail than other folks. But I had rather go to jail with a good conscience, than be at liberty without one."

*Bishop.*—. . . "As to your conscience, you know that preaching out of your parish is contrary to the canons of the Church."

*Berridge.*—"There is one canon, my lord which I dare not disobey. That says, 'Go preach the Gospel to *every creature*.'"

Berridge for a while was annoyed by the efforts of his enemies to silence him, but he was soon left the undisputed master of the field of contest. He went everywhere preaching the word.

A letter from Mr. Berridge to Lady Huntingdon, concerning her afflictions and persecutions, will make a pleasing and instructive close to this topic of our narrative.

"In the present state of things, a winter is as much wanted to continue the earth fruitful as a summer. If the grass were always growing, it would soon grow to nothing; just as the flowers that blow much and long, generally blow

themselves to death. And as it is thus with the ground, so it is with the laborers too. Afflictions, desertions, and temptations are as needful as consolations. Jonah's whale will teach a good lesson, as well as Pisgah's top; and a man may sometimes learn as much from being a night and a day in the deep, as from being forty days in the mount. I see Jonah come out of a whale, and cured of his rebellion; I see Moses go up to the mount with meekness, but come down in a huff, and break the tables. Further, I see three picked disciples attending their Master to the mount, and fall asleep there. I believe you must be clad only in sackcloth while you tarry only in the wilderness, and be a night-mourning widow till the Bridegroom fetches you home. Jesus has given you a hand and a heart to execute great things for his glory, and therefore he will deal you out a suitable measure of afflictions to keep you steady. Did Paul labor more abundantly than all his brethren? He had more abundant stripes than they all. The Master will always

new shave your crown before he puts a fresh coronet upon your head.

“A very heavy time have I had for the last three weeks, cloudy days and moonless nights. Only a little consolation, fetched down now and then by a little dull prayer. At times I am ready to wish that sin and the devil were both dead; they make such a horrible racket within me and about me. Rather, let me pray, Lord, give me faith and patience, teach me to expect the cross daily, and help me to take it up cheerfully.”

## CHAPTER X.

## UNHAPPY IRELAND.

WE have thus far noticed briefly the labors and persecutions of Lady Huntingdon in England. That was her principal field. Though she had occasionally turned her attention with interest toward Scotland, she left that field mostly, so far as furthering the revival of religion was concerned, to its own awakened ministers, and particularly to her friend Lady Glenorchy.

Though thus interested deeply in one kingdom, her sympathies were *for a world* lying in the wicked one. It was early excited toward Ireland. There were special reasons for this. Her grandfather was a baronet of that country. Her mother was an Irish lady. Her eldest daughter had married the Irish count, Moira, and resided there. Her relative, the

Rev. Walter Shirley, was a clergyman of Dublin. Yet, for several reasons, she did not extend the ministry over which she presided to Ireland, until 1771. Before this time Whitefield's powerful gospel appeals had been heard in its metropolis, and to some extent in its country towns.

John and Charles Wesley had been there, and had sown seed amid persecution, which was already bringing forth much fruit. Still, popish superstition enslaved the great mass of the people. The Protestant Church was, for the most part, in a state of dead formality.

Influenced by this state of things, and at the suggestions of her friends in Dublin, the countess rented a hall in that city, in 1771, and sent one of her preachers to maintain in it regular service. It prospered and became a flourishing society, but choosing to become an *Independent* church, her ladyship gave up her management of it, and purchased, in 1773, an old Presbyterian church in Plunket-

street. Much opposition arose from many quarters, yet the work of God went forward. Students were sent to Ireland from Trevecca, and many country districts were canvassed with success. But the harvest was great, and the laborers few. Her ladyship writes, in view of the little that had been or could then be done: "Poor, wicked Ireland, I trust, shall yet have a gospel day. I can't see how or when, but it must be; and till I find that opportunity my eye is only waiting darkly for its accomplishment."

Mr. Shirley co-operated so fully and boldly with Lady Huntingdon's preachers, that a storm of indignation was raised against him. This wrath was, on one occasion, manifested in a very ludicrous manner. The assistant minister of his own church went to the archbishop with what he declared to be an astonishing disclosure against Shirley. Perhaps the archbishop would hardly credit it, but Mr. Shirley, he said, actually *wore white stockings*. His grace, in order to throw contempt on

the complainer as well as the complaint, asked, with an affected solemnity, if Mr. Shirley *wore them over his boots*. “If,” said he, “I should hear he does that, I shall deal with him accordingly.”

At this time of persecution and want of more laborers in Dublin and throughout Ireland generally, God raised up, by a singular providence, a private gentleman of fortune to be an eminent instrument of good.

The history of the conversion and labors of William Smyth, Esq., has an immediate connection with this period of our narrative.

His wife had a passionate fondness for theatrical exhibitions. Garrick, the wonderful actor, was then producing a great sensation in London, and she resolved to hear him. Unable to dissuade her from her purpose, and not being able to go to London himself, her husband committed her to the care of Colonel Smyth, his brother, who brought her to London and introduced her to the hospitality of the Duchess of Leeds. Surrounded, as she

now was, by those who attended every place of fashionable amusement, Mrs. Smyth frequently heard Garrick.

Having gratified her curiosity in this respect, her attention was arrested by the public rumor of the eloquence of Romaine at St. Anne's Church, Blackfriars. She determined to hear him. In vain the duchess sneered at his "Methodism," and termed him an "enthusiast;" equally without effect did they, who had just accompanied her to the crowded theater, urge that his church was insufferably thronged. She went and heard a sermon, full of Divine unction, from the text: "Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath." She was awakened to a sense of her sinfulness, and soon found peace in believing.

On hearing of this change in his wife, Mr. Smyth hastened to London, under the most intense excitement. He felt that she was bringing ruin on herself and family. But she explained to him her great peace and its Divine

source, and begged him to hear Romaine. He did, and he too became the subject of renewing grace.

At the time that Lady Huntingdon opened the chapel in Plunket-street, Mr. and Mrs. Smyth were active Christians. But this chapel was at an inconvenient distance from their residence, and in an obscure part of the city. Near them was a large, wealthy, and worldly community. Mr. Smyth, therefore, in 1786, erected, in the vicinity of his residence, a large, well-proportioned, and tastefully-furnished chapel, at his sole expense. A friendly separation from the Plunket-street chapel was made, of such as were better accommodated by the "Bethesda Chapel," as the new house was called. The day before its dedication, Mr. Smyth went into the chapel, with a few friends, and, kneeling in the center, besought God to accept it, and bless the word there preached. The prayer was answered in an eminent manner, and Bethesda Chapel was visited with marked revival influences, and from it a large

number of young men went forth in after years as preachers of the Gospel.

In the beginning of 1787 Mr. Wesley visited Dublin. He thus speaks of this chapel:

“On Saturday I preached in Bethesda, (Mr. Smyth’s new chapel.) It is very neat, but not gay; and I believe will hold about as many as West-street Chapel. Mr. Smyth read prayers, and gave out the hymns, which were sung by fifteen or twenty fine singers. It was thought that we had between seven and eight hundred communicants. And, indeed, the power of God was in the midst of them. On Monday and Tuesday I preached again at Bethesda, and God touched several hearts, even of the rich and great; so that (for the time at least) they were almost persuaded to be Christians. It seems as if the good providence of God had prepared this place for those rich and honorable sinners who will not deign to receive any message from God but in the genteel way.”

After making a tour through the country, Wesley again preached at Bethesda. He ob-

serves: "Many fair blossoms we see here, and surely some fruit will follow. We had a brilliant congregation, among which were honorable and right honorable persons. But I felt that they were all given into my hands; for God was in the midst. What a mercy it is, what a marvelous condescension in God, to provide such places as Lady Huntingdon's chapel for those delicate hearers who could not bear sound doctrine if it were not set off with pretty trifles!"

Soon after the establishment of a congregation in his elegant chapel, Mr. Smyth added to it an Orphan School and Asylum for female children only, who were lodged in apartments over the chapel. One of the first ministers of this society was the Rev. Edward Smyth, brother to the generous founder. It appears to have been supplied mostly by the ministers of Lady Huntingdon's connection, though the proprietor himself became an active local preacher under Mr. Wesley. His superior abilities, as well as large fortune, were freely used in the cause of Christ.

Among the pious persons whom Mr. Smyth invited to his hospitable mansion after his conversion were Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher. About 1783 Mr. Fletcher spent some time in Dublin, and preached frequently at the French Church, which was attended by the descendants of the persecuted Huguenots. Among his hearers were several wholly unacquainted with the French language. When asked why they attended a service which was in an unknown tongue to them, they replied : " We go to look at the preacher, for heaven seems to beam from his countenance."

Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher were extensively useful in Ireland, not only in public, but in private. The atmosphere which surrounded them was pervaded with heavenly influences. People crowded in great multitudes to hear their melting eloquence. The people of God especially acknowledged their instrumentality in raising among them the standard of holy living.

We have seen, in the course of this narrative, that wherever Lady Huntingdon attempted to

open a new door for usefulness, friends and co-laborers were providentially provided for her assistance. Her only surviving child, Lady Elizabeth Moira, was such a friend to her religious projects for Ireland. She had married Lord Moira in early life, and was, at the time of which we speak, exerting a great influence in Dublin, the city of her residence. Possessing a highly cultivated mind, and much of that force of character which distinguished her mother, her countenance of the preachers who visited Dublin under the direction of the latter, was of much importance. At one time, Dr. Peckwell, an eminent and faithful preacher associated with Lady Huntingdon, was exciting a great interest in the Irish metropolis. Through Lady Moira's influence he was invited to preach at a chapel "*frequented almost exclusively by persons of the first rank and respectability.*" The preacher boldly declared to his astonished hearers the whole counsel of God. He denounced the eternal wrath of God against all who repented not, and entered a solemn

protest against the preaching of those who "never mentioned hell to ears polite." A storm of indignation was raised, which found expression, in part, against Lady Moira, whom the foundress of the chapel, Lady Denny, accused of imposing upon her society a Methodist preacher. To this accusation her ladyship sent the following spirited reply :

"Conscious of the most upright intentions, and fearless of being branded with fanaticism, Lady Moira avows her firm conviction of the justness and propriety of all that was advanced from the pulpit by the respectable clergyman whom Lady Arabella Denny and others have charged with Methodism, and the propagation of new doctrines, subversive of all morality and the Established Church ; such charges become ridiculous and contemptible when unsupported by evidence, and put forth by persons who have never exerted one ray of intellect toward the discovery of truth from the prevalent errors of the day. If Lady Arabella Denny and her friends will be at the trouble of comparing the

doctrines preached by Dr. Peckwell, with the Thirty-nine Articles and other parts of the Prayer Book, they may perhaps discover that those clergymen whom they so unsparingly vilify with every odious epithet are among the number of those who faithfully and conscientiously preach what they so solemnly subscribed at their ordination."

Thus defended, Dr. Peckwell continued to disturb the consciences of those who, in the pride of birth and station, disdained the humbling truths of religion.

But Ireland raised up other distinguished friends to Lady Huntingdon. In the year 1767 there was a young man, just graduating from the University of Dublin. He belonged to an ancient and respectable family of Ireland, and numbered among his relatives some of the eminent persons of the land. His name was Richard De Courcy. He was a brilliant scholar and an eloquent speaker. At the age of twenty-three he was ordained deacon, and became assistant preacher of Mr. Shirley, through

whose influence he seems to have learned the power of the Gospel.

Happening at Dublin, his eloquence attracted crowds to the most spacious church in the city. The cost, to him, of his faithfulness and popularity, was expulsion from the pulpits of the Established Church, and a refusal by the bishop to ordain him elder.

At this time of trial, Lady Huntingdon came to his relief. She secured him further ordination by a bishop in England, and his popular talents were added to her already large and valiant corps of itinerants. He was immediately introduced to Mr. Whitefield at the Tabernacle. His appearance was exceedingly youthful, and by some accident to his ordinary apparel, he wore his gown and cassock. Whitefield, thinking, perhaps, that there was a little vain show in this, took off his hat on being presented to De Courcy, and bending toward him, placed his hand on a deep scar in his head. "This wound, sir," said Whitefield, "I got in your country for preaching Christ."

But the old and scarred warrior soon learned that the young recruit, though, by accident, in an ostentatious uniform, was worthy of his confidence. They became warm and intimate friends.

Such were some of the chapels and laborers of Lady Huntingdon in Ireland. Her labor there, though beginning late in her life, and not extended over the country as was Wesley's, was marked by the same *Divine* approval which distinguished it everywhere.

## CHAPTER XI.

## PLANNING LIBERAL THINGS.

To those who are devoted to the work of God, with earnest hearts and willing hands, a door of usefulness is ever open. And as each field of labor entered is well improved, others are presented still wider and more fruitful. Such, at least, was the experience of Lady Huntingdon. She had penetrated every part of England and Wales, raising up flourishing churches at many important points. She had sown precious seed in Scotland, and obtained fruit of faithful labor in Ireland. Now the sudden death of Whitefield, and the transfer to her, by his will, of all his interest in the Orphan House at Bethesda, in Georgia, had imposed new and great responsibilities.

Whitefield had, for thirty years, nourished

this institution with unremitting zeal. His last visit to it was made in the early part of 1770. He had just completed tasteful improvements upon the buildings and the grounds, and added to the college a department for literary and classical study. To his ardent feelings everything about it seemed flourishing. He parted from its green shades, and from the citizens of Bethesda, who had honored his visit by flattering attentions, with a heart glowing with gratitude. He traveled North, and preached everywhere to listening multitudes. Having arrived on the banks of our own Merrimac, he suddenly but sweetly "fell asleep in Jesus."

When Lady Huntingdon had removed all the legal impediments to her possession of the Orphan House and its lands, she began to devise liberal things concerning it. But already the cloud which so soon shrouded in darkness the affairs of this institution began to appear in the distance. It had, unfortunately, been left in unfaithful hands, and it was watched by those

who were ready to seize it as a prey. These troubles were foreshadowed in the following admonitory letter to her ladyship, from her faithful friend, Mr. Berridge.

“Mr. Winter, who went to Georgia with Mr. Whitefield, and returned last Christmas, called lately upon me and acquainted me with the state of the Orphan House. He says there are but few orphans in the house, and no symptoms of grace in any. Mr. Wright has the whole management of the house, who, according to my little knowledge of him, seems neither to have zeal nor grace enough for the work. Mr. Whitefield, when at Georgia, made a sumptuous feast, on a Sunday, for all the better dressed people, intending to renew it every year by way of commemoration; but I hope you will put a stop to this feasting business. I hope the Orphan House may not soon become a mere Blue-coat Hospital and Grammar School. If Mr. Fletcher could go to Georgia for a year, things might be on a better footing. Indeed, I never could relish

Mr. Wright. He seems a mere cabinet-maker, without godliness. Mr. Winter, who gave me this information, is a zealous, prudent, godly youth, and is now settled at Bristol, so that you may easily obtain all needful intelligence from him."

Expecting to meet with obstacles, Lady Huntingdon pressed forward, nothing daunted, to the accomplishment of her desires for America. She sent a circular letter to all her preachers to meet her at Trevecca, October 9, 1772. The main purpose of the conference was to set apart missionaries for the work in Georgia. A master, a president, and a stewardess for the Orphan House, and several young men to itinerate through the neighboring country, were appointed. Her ladyship directed in her call, that the day of ordination should be observed throughout her connection as a day of fasting, and prayer for God's blessing on the work about to be undertaken. The circular closed with the following expression: "As Lady Huntingdon

supposes this the most important event of her whole life, so all that bear her any regard, in connection with her, she must entreat to be present, and is bound to believe great blessings, from the Lord Jesus Christ, will descend upon all who are made willing to help her with their presence and prayers."

In the same spirit of sanguine expectation of increased usefulness, she closes a more private invitation to the gathering: "I must repeat the surprising success of our labors everywhere. How many times ten thousand hear each day, I dare not say; and the calls are increasing so fast that my heart is broken not to be able to supply all. And this opening in America is the astonishment of all who love or fear the Lord. . . . The amazing blessings before us engage me to write so many letters that you must excuse my not being more particular."

Great was the rejoicing at Trevecca on the day of the missionary ordination. Few such occasions had then been known. Prayer, preaching, and thanksgiving were repeated for

several days. The following extract from a hymn written for the occasion shows the devout spirit of the meeting :

“ Go, destined vessel, heavenly freighted, go ;  
For lo ! the Lord’s ambassadors are thine :  
Faith sits at helm, and hope attends the prow,  
While thousands swell the sails with balmy prayer.

“ Jesus, thy Guardian, walks the briny wave,  
Or on the whirlwind rides, or rules the storm ;  
His eye regards thee, vigilant to save,  
Though danger varies its terrific form.

“ Black gath’ring tempests, awed by his command,  
Their hideous forms in lowly murmurs cease ;  
While o’er the monstrous surge he waves his hand,  
Or spreads the silken mantel of his peace.

“ The Lord of elements is Lord of men ;  
He stills the menace of the hostile wind :  
His servants, soon as the glad port they gain,  
In hearts prepared, shall friendly welcome find.”

Similar services were held in Tottenham Chapel, and in the open air on Tower Hill.

On the 27th of October the missionaries embarked on board the vessel bound for America. Thousands attended them to the water’s side.

As the boat which conveyed them to the vessel left the shore, many eyes were suffused with tears, and hats and handkerchiefs waved them an affecting farewell. A wide-spread interest in this mission had been excited, and many prayers for their success accompanied the voyagers to what seemed then a very far off land. When, in due time, it was announced that they had arrived safe in Georgia, after *only a six weeks' voyage*, (!) all felt that their way had been wonderfully prospered.

The missionaries found at the Orphan House a home prepared for them. They immediately scattered over the country preaching Christ. Many gave heed to their word, especially of the neglected Africans. The simplicity and fervor of their appeals were well adapted to arrest their attention and win them to Christ. The "*poor Indian*," too, gave some attention to the message of salvation, and an interest was provoked for them in the hearts of the Georgians, by the earnest spirit of the new laborers. Great expectations were excited concerning the

abundant harvest which seemed ready for the reapers. The call which was sent to England for more laborers, greatly moved Lady Huntingdon. She writes:

“America is honored by the mission sent over. The province of Georgia has made proposals to build a Church at their own expense, and present me with it, that the College of Georgia may have their ministry in that part honored. The invitations I have for our ministry in various parts of America are so kind and affectionate, that it looks as if we were to have our way free through the whole continent.

“ My last letters from America inform me our way appears to be made to the Cherokee Indians ; and in all the back settlements we are assured the people will joyfully build us churches at their own expense, and present them to us, to settle perpetually for our use. Some great, very great work is intended by the Lord among the heathen. Should this appear, I should rejoice to go myself to establish a college for the Indian nations. *I can't help thinking that*

*before I die the Lord will have me there, if only to make coats and garments for the poor Indians."*

We have alluded to the fact that the person to whom Whitefield intrusted the management of the Orphan House proved unfaithful. Lady Huntingdon was equally unfortunate in her agent. He had long maintained a character for integrity at home, but the temptation of the trust of many thousands of dollars, to be used among strangers and far from its owner, appears to have allured him from an honest course. He made large sales of property, and rendered no account of it to her ladyship. He wasted time and money in a style of living unbecoming his station and profession. In addition to this painful circumstance, she learned that the Orphan House had been consumed by fire. But this disappointment she received with thankful submission to the hand of Providence. She observes: "No lives being lost in the fire, has made my heart so thankful, that, for the many thousands I have temporarily lost by it,

I could never wish it for one moment to be otherwise, believing the Lord removed it only out of our way, and that it was not, somehow, on that right foundation of simplicity and faith our works must stand upon."

Concerning this disaster, the venerable Berridge writes to the Rev. Mr. Winter: "It excites in me no surprise that the Orphan House is burned down. It was originally intended for orphans, and as such was a laudable design, but has ceased to be an orphan house, in order to become a lumber house for human learning, and God has cast a brand of his displeasure upon it. But how gracious has the Lord been to Mr. Whitefield in preserving it during his life-time! We all live to lay plans, and you laid one last winter, but your Master has shown you that he will not employ you as his counselor."

Added to these discouragements, was the confusion in the colony of Georgia, and consequently in the affairs there of the countess, occasioned by the American Revolution.

“But,” she writes to the Secretary of State concerning her American interests, “my greatest losses are by the king’s troops, the Americans behaving to me with great kindness.” Notwithstanding all these difficulties, a new and well-tried agent was sent to take charge of the enterprise in Georgia, and the Orphan House seems to have been rebuilt, for we hear it again spoken of as late as 1782. An end, however, was put to her hopes of usefulness in this unfortunate institution, by its unceremonious seizure by the authorities of the Georgia Assembly. By some assumed or real legal claim, they transferred her possession of its control to themselves.

Still believing that she had a work to perform for America, Lady Huntingdon formed a noble project for the benefit of the Indians. She resolved to convert all the revenues from her property in Georgia, which was still considerable, into a fund for a mission to the Indians, on a large scale. With this view she maintained, for some time, a correspondence

with Washington. The following letter, dated April 8, 1784, well shows the spirit of these epistles.

“Sir: I live in hopes that before this you have received, by our mutual and most excellent friend, Mr. Fairfax, the grateful acknowledgments of my heart for your most polite and friendly letter; this further trouble arises from the kindness of Sir James Jay offering to take charge of my packets to the several governors of those states of America to whom I have applied on the subject of my most anxious wishes for the poor Indians: I felt it quite impossible to let anything go out of my hands without communicating my intentions to you before all others. I have therefore taken the liberty of sending you, with this, a copy of my circular to the governor of each state, together with a plan, or rather outlines of a plan, thrown together to convey some idea of my views. With my very best compliments to Mrs. Washington, I remain, with the greatest

respect and esteem, sir, your most obliged,  
and most faithful, and obedient, humble serv-  
ant,

S. HUNTINGDON."

An intimation in the above is given, of Lady Huntingdon's application to the governors of the several states for grants of lands for assisting missionary labor to the Indians. Among her papers a regularly arranged plan for this purpose was found after her death, encouraged by the Earl of Dartmouth. Students were to be sent from Trevecca, and the most energetic efforts were to be made to carry it into successful operation. But all failed. Though this American enterprise was one which, for a time, engaged the countess's purest and most fondly cherished purposes; and though good was undoubtedly done by her missionaries, yet the work she devised was assigned to other hands. This part of her history is peculiarly instructive. It shows that the plans of the wisest and holiest may fail. The *end* she had so much at heart for the New World, was in a

wonderful degree accomplished by the other great leader of the Methodist revival. Wesley lived to see those who acted under his counsels, bearing the gospel to every settlement of the colonies, and even beyond, into the camps of the Indians.

## CHAPTER XII.

## C O N T R O V E R S Y.

THE period of Lady Huntingdon's history covered by the narrative of the last chapter was one of controversy. Circumstances seemingly trivial were occasions of disputes concerning religious truth, which were important and permanent in their influence. We have reserved our account of them for a connected statement.

The early acquaintance of Lady Huntingdon and John Wesley has been noticed. The countess had acknowledged her indebtedness to Wesley for valuable counsel in her first efforts to be a Christian. For some years they seem to have been one, not only in Christian affection, but in the articles of their faith. The doctrines of Christian perfection and the direct witness of the Spirit, which Wesley so con-

stantly and ably preached, she cordially received. But when Whitefield adopted the Calvinistic views of the Divine purposes, she became their cordial advocate. Yet Wesley and Lady Huntingdon continued to cherish toward each other feelings of respect and Christian love.

As late as March, 1769, Wesley was at Bath, with his brother Charles, in friendly intercourse with her ladyship, and preaching in her chapel. Again, in the following May, they visit in company the school at Kingswood, and, after a sermon by Wesley, unite in celebrating the Lord's Supper. In August of the same year, Wesley and Fletcher, as we have stated in the chapter on the "School of the Prophets," were laboring with great spiritual power, at the anniversary jubilee of the college. In January of the following year, they meet again at the mansion of the countess on Portland Row, London, and Wesley administered the Holy Communion to Lady Huntingdon and her friends. They thus part,

and though they both toil on in God's vineyard for twenty years, meet in co-operative labor no more! How sad!

A brief statement of the manner in which this alienation occurred will be all that seems necessary to our narrative.

In the summer of this year, (1770,) Wesley's Conference met at London. Upon their "*Minutes*" a record was made of several particulars in which it was thought the Wesleyan people were "leaning too much toward Calvinism;" and suggestions were also made by which this "leaning" might be avoided.

Lady Huntingdon, her relative, Rev. Walter Shirley, and some others, thought that Wesley and the Conference held, in these "*Minutes*," a doctrine contrary to the Scriptural teaching of salvation by faith alone. Being, therefore, greatly alarmed, they hastily wrote a circular letter, and sent it over the land, calling upon all the evangelical preachers to meet Lady Huntingdon the following summer at Bristol, (where Wesley's Conference was again to

assemble,) and to “*go in a body to said Conference, and insist upon a formal recantation of said Minutes; and in case of a refusal, to publish their protest against them.*”

The calls of Lady Huntingdon to convene the ministers of her acquaintance had always been promptly responded to, but in this case nearly all were silent, or opposed to the object of the meeting. Eight persons attended, all of whom were immediately connected with her ladyship.

There was an evident impropriety in this form of dissent from the doctrine of the Minutes. Lady Huntingdon herself soon saw this. With her characteristic Christian candor she addressed a note to the Conference, in which she confessed the haste, and consequent indiscretion, of the circular letter, and respectfully requested that the opposers of the Minutes might be permitted to be heard in their body through a committee.

This was granted. Mr. Shirley, with several others, then entered the Conference, and, after apologizing for the circular, urged, in an excel-

lent spirit, their objections against what *he understood* to be the doctrine of the Minutes. In reply, Mr. Wesley assured him and his friends that he taught no such sentiments as they described. He appealed to his public preaching for more than thirty years, and to his published sermons, as well as numerous other writings, in proof that he uniformly taught justification by faith alone. Since, however, the Minutes were acknowledged not to be sufficiently guarded in this respect, Mr. Wesley, with fifty-two of his preachers, signed a declaration, in which they say: "We have no trust or confidence but in the alone merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for justification or salvation, either in life, death, or the day of judgment."

It does not appear that the Conference, and the Wesleyan Connection, for whom the Minutes were written, understood them to teach anything contrary to this; but as others did, looking at it from another doctrinal position, this declaration was made for the sake of peace

Having thus satisfied Mr. Shirley, the Conference requested him to acknowledge, in writing, that he had mistaken the meaning of the doctrinal points in the Minutes. This he did, fully and frankly.

Here the *personal* character of the controversy should have ended, but the circular letter had represented Wesley as teaching doctrines "*repugnant to Scripture*, and the whole plan of man's salvation under the new covenant." Fletcher, immediately after its appearance, had taken up his pen and written a defense of his honored father in the Gospel, against these charges. They contained some kind, but very plain reproofs of Mr. Shirley's agency in the affair. After learning that he had made so honorable and Christian a correction at the Conference of his false step, he hastened a messenger to Bristol, where his defense was being published, to delay the printing, that these personal references might be expunged. But the pamphlet was nearly all printed, and notice given of its immediate sale, and as the printer

had received previous orders to hasten it, they were put into immediate circulation. Mr. Shirley followed this publication by “a statement” of his connection with the protest, to which he added some “reflections,” and then retired from the controversy. Mr. Fletcher published another letter, or “Check to Antinomianism.” Sir Richard Hill then entered the list against Mr. Fletcher, followed by his brother, the Rev. Rowland Hill, at this time a young man; and next came the humorous Berridge; and, lastly, the Rev. Augustus Toplady, the most able of them all. Mr. Thomas Olivers and Mr. Sellon had something to say on Mr. Fletcher’s side, but he met, mostly unaided, his numerous opponents. He had to encounter not only their objections to his arguments, but the severe attacks of some of them upon Mr. Wesley’s private and ministerial character. As to Wesley, being so ably defended, he went quietly about his accustomed work of preaching Christ, and watching, with pastoral diligence, the souls God had committed to his care.

Lady Huntingdon, during this commotion, believed, doubtless, that Mr. Wesley had adopted wrong views of Scriptural truth, but she gave no countenance to the aspersions of his character. She had known his goodness and eminent usefulness too long. It seems strange, that with these views, she should have so hastily rejected his Christian fellowship. Immediately after the Conference in which the offensive statements were made, Mr. Wesley waited for her ladyship at Bristol, to accompany her to the anniversary meeting at Trevecca, according to a previous appointment. But she had seen the Minutes, and she wrote to him that, so long as he held those sentiments, her pulpits were shut against him. The evidence of more than thirty years' labor, that he was *sent of God* to preach, must be disregarded for a hasty interpretation of a few doctrinal statements. The proofs, too, of his acknowledged Divine assistance in preaching, given one year before at Trevecca, and the recollection of his recent breaking of bread with her at the Lord's Sup-

per, under her hospitable roof, must be set aside, at the bidding of a creed, concerning which good men always have differed, and perhaps always will differ. But such is the weakness of even superior goodness. The lesson it teaches is full of important instruction.

Mr. Jackson, in his life of Charles Wesley, gives the following touching account of the feelings of the countess's last moments concerning Wesley:

“Lady Huntingdon survived Mr. Wesley about five months. After his death a small tract was published, containing the interesting particulars of his last illness, with the expressions to which he gave utterance in the immediate prospect of dissolution. It was drawn up with the beautiful simplicity of truth, and bore the initials of his friend Elizabeth Ritchie. A copy of this document fell into the hands of Lady Huntingdon, who read it with superior interest, because, according to the natural course of things, the time of her own departure was at hand. She sent for Joseph Bradford,

who for many years had been Mr. Wesley's traveling companion, and asked him if this account of Mr. Wesley was true ; and whether he really died acknowledging his sole dependence upon the meritorious sacrifice of Christ for acceptance and eternal life. He assured her ladyship that the whole was strictly true, and that from his own knowledge he could declare, whatever reports to the contrary had been circulated, the principles which Mr. Wesley recognized upon his death-bed had invariably been the subjects of his ministry. She listened with eager attention to this statement, confessed she had believed he had grievously departed from the truth, and then, bursting into tears, expressed her deep regret at the separation which had taken place between them. The spell, which ought never to have bound her spirit, was then broken."

Mr. Benson, the head master of the college at Trevecca, had avowed his belief in the Wesleyan doctrines, and was dismissed, though with a courteous certificate of his good character

and competency to teach. Mr. Fletcher, whose gratuitous services to the school had met with the unqualified approbation of its excellent foundress, delicately withdrew, to save Lady Huntingdon the painful duty which consistency would have required of her, of dismissing him. Between Fletcher and the countess there had ever been, not only Christian fellowship and regard, but, on her part, admiration of his gifts and spirit, and on his, profound respect for her noble sacrifices for Christ. Their friendship was not wholly broken by the shock of controversy.

When the heat of the discussion had a little subsided, Sir Richard Hill expressed a wish "to suppress all he had ever written concerning the Minutes," and his brother Rowland wrote to London to stop the sale of one of his bitterest pamphlets. "Thus," he says, "I have done my utmost to prevent the evil that might arise from my wrong touches of the ark of God." "A softer style and spirit would have become me." Thus did these good men recover

their general feeling of what became them as ministers and Christians. As to Mr. Fletcher, even religious controversy did not mar his heavenly spirit. Even his opponents confessed this. In the midst of the polemic battle he retired, in feeble and failing health, to the hospitable roof of a friend at Stoke-Newington. Here he was visited by some of his opponents, who were astonished at the depth of his communion with God. “I went,” exclaimed one, “to see a man with one foot in the grave, but I found a man with one foot in heaven.”

Mr. Fletcher and Shirley are found, after these memorable contests, at the house of their mutual friend, Smyth of Dublin, holding communion together in the things which pertain to a common salvation.

Thus most of the combatants met in peace on earth. Does not the sentiment find almost universal utterance now, in the Christian Church, that they have met where there is but *one* feeling and *one* song, “Praise to the Lamb.”

## CHAPTER XIII.

## CHANGES.

THE controversy, no doubt, for a time disturbed Lady Huntingdon's peace of mind and embarrassed her labors. But her prevailing desire was to save all the souls possible. And though constantly discouraged by unfavorable circumstances in the prosecution of her American enterprises, and finally compelled to abandon them, she watched for other and new fields of usefulness.

In this spirit she turned her attention, in 1776, to a large building in the northern portion of London, which had been built and occupied as a place of *Sunday* amusement. It was called the Pantheon, and seems to have been a temple, if not of false *gods*, yet fully dedicated to the god of this world; but it proved unprofitable to its proprietors, and was now closed.

The countess consulted her friends concerning the expediency of the purchase of it for a place of religious worship. The vicinity in which it was located was almost wholly destitute of moral instruction. It had no evangelical preaching, and no pastor nor missionary to care for their souls. But some of her ladyship's friends thought the enterprise hazardous in view of her other heavy pecuniary liabilities, and it was for the time abandoned, with what feeling the following letter will indicate:

“ My heart seems strongly set upon having this temple of folly dedicated to Jehovah Jesus, the great Head of his Church and people. Dear Mr. Berridge does not discourage the undertaking, but says I may count upon a fit of sickness if I engage in this affair. I feel so deeply for the perishing thousands in that part of London, that I am almost tempted to run every risk; and though at this moment I have not a penny to command, yet I am so firmly persuaded of the goodness of the Master whose I am, and whom I desire to serve, that I

shall not want gold nor silver for the work. It is his cause. He has the hearts of all at his disposal, and I shall have help when he sees fit to employ me in his service. Nevertheless, with some regret I give up the matter at this time; . . . but faith tells me to go forward, *nothing fearing, nothing doubting.*"

The moment the countess notified the owners of the Pantheon, who were waiting for her answer, that she should not purchase, it was sold to a company of pious men, who gave it in charge to the Rev. Herbert Jones and the Rev. William Taylor, two zealous and able reformed ministers. Much expense and labor was incurred in fitting it as a place of Divine worship. But all obstacles were overcome, the place dedicated to the "One God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." The chaplains entered upon their labors in faith, and the place was crowded with serious worshipers. But the *adversary*, whose kingdom was suffering loss, raised up an enemy from among God's professed people. As he has ever done, he came under the cloak

of piety ; of jealousy for the rights of “The Church.” The Rev. Mr. Sellon, the minister within whose parish the Pantheon was situated, claimed a right to control it in all things. He demanded that all the money derived from collections at the sacrament, and from the pews, should be paid to him. He asserted his right to occupy the pulpit when he pleased, and denied that right to any other minister without his permission. This must seem strange to the reader when he is reminded, that neither this avaricious clergyman himself, nor any with whom he was concerned, had ever paid a penny toward the property from which he was determined to have an income. His claim was, of course, resisted, and he appealed to a *church law*, almost wholly, even then, out of use, and spurned by all good men. By this law he was sustained, and Mr. Jones and Mr. Taylor were denied the use of the church which had been purchased for them, unless they obtained permission of Mr. Sellon, and paid him largely for that which was not his.

In this state of affairs the countess came to the rescue. By the aid and advice of Lord Dartmouth, and her old and generous friend, Mr. Thornton, and some others, she became the owner of the Pantheon. She supposed, that as a *peeress*, she would be out of the reach of Mr. Sellon and the ecclesiastical law, which had crushed the enterprise of her predecessors in this truly missionary work.

She arranged and furnished the building still more suitably for a chapel. The audience-room was of a circular form, with two galleries, rising one above the other, supported by beautifully ornamented pillars, and the whole surmounted by a noble dome. She gave it the name of “Spafields Chapel,” and re-opened it for the use of the ministers of her connection on the twenty-eighth of March, 1779. The cloud of Divine mercy seemed again gathering around this temple. “Blessed be God,” exclaimed the countess, “for the ability and strength which has been given me in the prosecution of this affair. Opposition is to be expected from that

unhappy man; but the Lord, whose we are, and whom we serve, will make us more than courageous, and cause his name and the unsearchable riches of his grace to triumph over all the malice and vain opposition of his enemies. O pray that his presence may be with us, and the power of his arm revealed in the conversion of sinners to himself! My eye is directed to this ultimate and only end of all my labors."

But Mr. Sellon had not ended his selfish opposition. He prosecuted Lady Huntingdon's ministers for preaching in the Pantheon without his permission. On consulting the highest legal authority in the kingdom, she learned that the wicked parish minister might, if he chose, prevent even her chaplains from pursuing their benevolent labors. It was evident, also, that in the same way all her chapels might be shut up!!

Thus, after nearly forty years' employment of ministers to preach the gospel to those who were hungry for the bread of life, and after

having been most distinctly owned of God in this work, she found that she had been acting illegally; and that any persecuting man might defeat all her designs, if she pursued the same course. This surely was a great change in the aspect of affairs! What could be done?

Some of our readers may need to be informed, that there is a law in England called the “Toleration Act,” which allows all who differ from the “Established Church,” to have their own chapels, and worship God their own way. But all who ask to be protected by this law, must either say they differ from the State Church, or *seem* to do so, by the request. Now Lady Huntingdon did *not* differ in feeling or sentiment from this Church. She was ardently attached to it and its usages. But she wished to do, what, but for an almost forgotten law, she might do, and that which had long been done, namely, manage the affairs of her own places of worship. But as this was now clearly determined to be “irreg-

ular," there was no way left, but for her ministers to ask for the privileges of the "Toleration Act," and thus be regarded as seceders from the Church of their choice, and the countess, as their head, to be accounted as "dissenting," though she still remained a member in spirit. To accomplish this, Mr. Wills and Mr. Taylor, the present chaplains of the Spafields society, became "dissenters," and as such continued in quiet possession of their place of worship. Sellon was spoiled of his gains, and the enemies of religion robbed of the pleasure of seeing a useful and large society scattered. But this step led her old and faithful friends Romaine, Venn, Townsend, and others, to cease to labor in her chapels. To do so now, would seem to profess to depart, in a measure at least, from their Church. This they declined doing. Yet they retained a cordial fellowship for the countess and her ministers. Notwithstanding, faithful laborers were raised up for the countess's assistance, and the work went on. The following letter

will show the spirit of her ladyship under all these conflicts :

“Long have I been looking for some release to indulge your friends, and to have you share in the blessed success of the gospel that daily surrounds us. It is great indeed. But persecutions are each hour arising against me, and only at me seems all the bitterness expressed. I am to be cast out of the Church now, *only for what I have been doing these forty years, speaking and living for Jesus Christ!* and if the days of my captivity are now to be accomplished, those who turn me out, and so set me at liberty, may soon feel what it is, by sore distress themselves for those hard services they have caused me. Blessed be the Lord, I have not one care relative to this event, but to be found exactly faithful to God and man through all. You will smile and rejoice with me in all I may suffer for our dear Immanuel’s sake. I have asked none to go with me, and none that do not come willingly to the help of the Lord, and by faith

in the Son of God, lay all at his feet; any others would do me no good, and *He* only knows these. But Mr. Wills, Mr. Glasscott, and Mr. Taylor offered themselves willingly for the people against the mighty; and may the evil pronounced against Meroz belong to none I know.

“The chapel is crowded from door to door, and multitudes go away disappointed at not being able to get in. . . . I have been severely handled and vilified; but none of these things move me; determined the short remnant of my declining age shall be employed in setting up the standard, and enlarging the circle of evangelical truth. With the Lord’s help, I shall go on in devotedness to his work, and wait contentedly for his approbation when called to give up my account.”

Having thus separated, in form, from the Episcopal Church, it became necessary that Lady Huntingdon’s Connection should ordain its ministers according to the plan of secession. The first ordination of this kind took place

at the Spafields Chapel in 1783. The candidates were six young men who were educated at the Trevecca College. The principle and form of ordination was essentially that adopted by Wesley for his American churches, and which they now use. The ceremony was deeply impressive, and the step seems to have given new energy to the work of God.

The following statement will show fully the position of the countess's connection, after the secession, as a distinct denomination of Christians. "They differ from the Wesleyans by holding the doctrinal articles of the Church of England, in their Calvinistic sense; from the Baptists, by the administration of baptism to infants, and that by sprinkling or pouring; from the Independents, in admitting the lawfulness, and in many cases the expediency, of using a Scriptural liturgy; from the Church of England itself, in being free to employ whatever they deem valuable, and to refuse what to them appears objectionable in her services, while they are exempt from that

corrupting influence to which she is exposed by her union with the state."

The chapel, whose erection had caused this great change in Lady Huntingdon's Connection, became emphatically a *revival* chapel.

The following incidents will illustrate the manner in which God blessed it to the good of souls.

One of its chaplains was once walking in the streets of Edinburgh, when he was thus addressed by a young man.

"Sir, I recognize you as one of the chaplains of the Spafields Church, London. Do you remember a note put up from an afflicted widow, begging the prayers of the congregation for the conversion of an ungodly son."

"I do well remember such a circumstance."

"Sir, *I am the very person*; and, wonderful to tell, the prayer was effectual. I was going on a frolic with some other abandoned young men, one Sunday, through the Spafields, and, passing by the chapel, I was struck with its appearance, and hearing that it was a Method-

ist chapel, I entered, when you, sir, read the note, requesting the prayers of the congregation for an afflicted widow's profligate son. I heard it with a sensation I cannot express. I was struck to the heart; and though I did not then know it was from my own mother, I felt the bitterness of a widow's heart who had a child as wicked as I knew myself to be.

“ My mind was instantly solemnized. My attention was riveted on the preacher. I heard his prayer and sermon with an impression very different from that which I had carried into the church. From that moment the Gospel truth penetrated my heart. I joined the congregation. I cried to God in Christ for mercy, and found peace in believing. I became my mother's comfort, as I had long been her heavy cross. I am now advantageously settled in this, my native country, and have endeavored to dry up the widow's tear which I so often caused to flow. We are blessed with every worldly comfort, and every day acknowledge the kind Providence that led me to Spafields Chapel.”

On one occasion a mob approached the Spa-fields Chapel, full of hate to religion and places of Divine worship. Their first purpose was to pull it down. But some one remarked, that the chapel belonged to Lady Huntingdon, at which they exhibited some signs of relenting.

At this critical moment one of the number exclaimed, "My mother attends there; it must not be touched." Thus appeased, the rioters turned away.

In 1790, although the countess had passed her fourscore years, and had assumed, as we have seen, heavy responsibilities for the cause of Christ, and although her last chapel enterprise had succeeded only by severe conflicts, yet she purchased a theater for a place of worship. It was situated in a portion of London where but little religious influence was exerted. The proprietor, finding that it was unprofitable, sold his lease of seventy-eight years to her ladyship for an annual rent of about five hundred dollars. She fitted it for her purpose, from her own purse, at an expense of thirteen thousand

dollars. The pulpit was placed on the front of the stage. The first floor was arranged with free seats, and was ample enough to accommodate six hundred persons. This part of the building was called the "circle," and had been used for feats of horsemanship. The stage and the galleries around the whole house were neatly fitted with pews, and the whole seated several thousand people.

Thus to the last we find this earnest laborer for Christ true to herself. No trials intimidated her. Failures, even, in one direction, did not prevent her from efforts in another. Her motto seemed to be, "*Expect great things, attempt great things.*"

## CHAPTER XIV.

## BETTER ACQUAINTED.

WE are drawing near to the close of our brief sketch of Lady Huntingdon's life. We have witnessed her conversion and its immediate fruits. We have seen her far-extended public labors. The faces of those with whom she associated have become somewhat familiar to us. We are not strangers to her personal and family afflictions, and we have learned that she did not accomplish the noble work of her life without bitter opposition. A knowledge of all these facts seems to authorize us to claim terms of greater intimacy with her. We will therefore accompany her in her more private walks, and study the secret workings of a heart from whence the generous actions flowed.

First, then, let us visit her in one of her short sojournings at Bristol. She goes to the

great congregation, visits the school, and projects new places of worship. All *this* we have learned to expect. And we are not surprised that, in an humble garb, and in a private manner, she calls at the prisons. She drops words of instruction and sympathy to the convicts, points them to a forgiving Saviour, and leaves them deeply affected.

She passes on to the house of pestilential disease, where poverty is added to great bodily suffering. Regardless of her own safety or comfort, she gently serves at the sick-bed, not saying merely, "Be ye warmed and clothed," but giving freely of her substance to provide for their temporal comfort. Thus establishing herself in their confidence, she earnestly commends to them the comforts of religion.

Leaving Bristol, we stop a few days with her at Newgate. Here are a different class of sufferers, "poor debtors," men whose poverty, in some cases, has been esteemed a crime. They are confined as felons, for the lack of a few dollars, which sickness, it may be, or sudden

disaster prevented them from securing. They are unhappy, not only in their confinement, but in their separation from their families, who were dependent upon their industry for bread.

How do these unfortunate sufferers welcome the visits of Lady Huntingdon and her sisters, the Ladies Hastings, whom she has taken with her? They inquire carefully into the circumstances of each, and liberate several, whose separate debts were less than fifty dollars.

As these liberated fathers shall hasten to their families, and gather their children about them, and tell them the story of those who may innocently seem to them as *angel liberators*, what blessings shall be bestowed upon them! Better still, and more glorious, will be the occasion when Christ shall say, “*I* was in prison, and ye visited me.” “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these, ye have done it unto me.”

We have referred to her attendance upon public preaching. We may inquire with what spirit she heard the word. The following

statement will show. When one of her preachers was about to enter the sacred desk, she retired to her closet for secret prayer. This was a constant habit. She there wrestled for a blessing upon the truth offered in the name of Christ. As soon as the service closed, she retired again for solemn audience with God. She besought a blessing to follow the efforts which had been made to save souls, that the seed sown might be made fruitful. Thus she set an example of a recognition of our dependence upon Divine aid in all our labors. And in thus doing, she secured to herself the largest benefit from the ordinances of God's house.

Consistently with the above-named practice, did she, at all times, and in all the various circumstances in which she was placed, converse of things which tended to edification. Her favorite theme was the goodness of God in her conversion, its happy fruits of peace and joy, and the necessity of such a change in the experience of all, if they would have any hope in death. The most deeply experienced Chris-

tians acknowledged a great benefit from social intercourse with her, and the most worldly and thoughtless were often made serious in her presence. Yet her conversation was not sermonic and repulsive, but lively and attractive. If she habitually spoke of religious things, it was from the abundance of a grateful and happy heart.

Let us pass now from the social into the family circle. By her widowhood Lady Huntingdon became the head of her family. By the frequent presence of friends and invited guests, it was frequently very numerous, yet the family altar was never neglected. Sometimes, in her parlor, in the presence of distinguished persons, she would herself lead the devotional exercises. On one of these occasions, a young lady, eminent for her gifts and attainments, as she was also for a reckless disregard for serious things, entered the room. On every side were lords and ladies, in a listening attitude. The countess, with an intonation of voice peculiar to her on such occasions, was praying. Struck

with the aspect of the scene, to her strange indeed, under the first impulse of her feelings, she laughed aloud. Recovering her self-possession, she became more serious, and apologized for her seeming levity. Made thoughtful by the religious influences about her, she employed her talents as a musical composer in setting to music a favorite hymn of the countess's collection.

Thus was this remarkable woman true to herself and religion, in her family circle.

Let us pass out with her now, from the retirement of home, to the presence of the highest in the Church, and into audience with royalty itself. We shall learn *why* she seeks such society, now that she has renounced worldly honor, and whether she carries thither her Christian faithfulness. In the winter of 1771, the Archbishop of Canterbury gave a series of balls and fashionable parties, at his palace. The extravagance of the expense of these occasions, and the mirthful indulgences of the guests, were not exceeded by any like

assemblies of the times. The wife of the archbishop was the leading personage in the fashionable world.

These facts were, of course, noised abroad, to the great reproach of religion. Even the gay attendants upon his drawing-rooms sneered at the “piety” of “his grace.” Afflicted at this state of things, the Countess Huntingdon sought and obtained a private interview with the archbishop and his wife. She courteously remonstrated with them concerning these improprieties. But his grace was violently angry, and his wife ridiculed Lady Huntingdon in all the fashionable circles, while the parties went on as before. Not discouraged in well doing, her ladyship next endeavored to remonstrate with the archbishop through a mutual friend of high position. But this only brought upon her additional abuse, and the brand, from the prelate, of “enthusiast” and “hypocrite.”

She next sought a private audience with the king. She was received cordially both by



LADY HUNTINGDON'S VISIT TO KING GEORGE III.



his majesty and the queen. When she had laid her complaint before him, the king replied: "Madam, the feelings you have discovered, and the conduct you have manifested on this occasion, are highly creditable to you. The archbishop's behavior has been slightly hinted to me already; but now that I have a certainty of his proceedings, and most ungenerous conduct toward your ladyship, after your trouble in remonstrating with him, I shall interpose my authority, and see what that will do toward reforming such indecent practices."

The countess continued more than an hour in familiar conversation with their majesties. The queen bestowed upon her many compliments for her benevolent enterprises. The king remarked that he was no stranger to her proceedings, "but," he added, "I have been told so many odd stories of your ladyship, that I am free to confess I felt a great degree of curiosity to see if you were at all like other women; and I am happy of having

the opportunity of assuring your ladyship of the very good opinion I have of you, and how very highly I estimate your character, your zeal and abilities, which cannot be consecrated to a more noble purpose."

After her ladyship had retired, the king said to Lord Dartmouth: "I was much taken with her appearance and manner. There is something so noble, so commanding, and withal so engaging about her, that I am quite captivated with her ladyship. She appears to possess talents of a very superior order, is clever, well-informed, and has all the ease and politeness belonging to a woman of rank. With all the enthusiasm ascribed to her, she is an honor to her sex and the nation."

A few days after this interview, the king sent a note to the archbishop. It expressed his "grief and concern that fashionable parties had found their way into a palace which, in former years, had been devoted to Divine studies, religious retirement, and the extensive exercise of charity and benevolence." He

trusted that the cause of offense “would be suppressed immediately,” so that he might not have occasion to “interpose in a different manner.”

The lord prelate and his offending wife, not feeling at liberty to sneer at this evidence of the king’s piety, conducted thenceforth more as became their station.

Thus Lady Huntingdon did not permit sin in high places to go unrebuked.

Not far from the same time the countess had occasion to show her Christian faithfulness in reproving a misstep in two of her most popular and beloved preachers.

It was briefly this. A parish minister who had a dependent family, became involved in debt, and was thrown into prison. His bishop would not let him fill the pulpit *for a limited time*, by another, though he might dispose of it permanently. This he did to one of Lady Huntingdon’s preachers, in the presence and through the influence of another. Nothing was said about *paying*

for it, and the place was formally and legally transferred. Soon after, the suffering and imprisoned clergyman was offered five thousand dollars for the position.

With deep emotion, he sent to the occupant, and begged that he would relinquish it, or pay something like the sum offered. Plain justice, and the wants of himself and family, pleaded *in vain* in his behalf. He was told *the law* was against him, and his demand was rejected wholly.

When these facts were known, they were used by the enemies of religion to its disadvantage. Lady Huntingdon arrived in the vicinity of these transactions, from one of her evangelical tours, in time to hear the bitterest reproaches hurled against the offending preachers. She lost no time in endeavoring to convince them of their error; failing to do this, she took from her purse the sum offered, (five thousand dollars,) and presented it to the imprisoned minister, who was thereby restored to his family, and freed from poverty.

This she did, to show to the world, so far as her influence could proclaim it, that religion forbade the act of which it complained. The ministers themselves were thus reproved, and the current of public feeling was changed toward those who professed to be followers of Christ.

It must have been impressed upon the reader, in the course of this biography, that a prominent trait in her ladyship's character was her benevolence. Some further illustrations of this will therefore be interesting.

One who knew her well has said: "Never, perhaps, did mortal make a nobler use of what she possessed, live less attached to the earth and its unrighteous mammon, or dispense it with a more open hand. She was one of the poor who lived upon her own bounty. If she grudged anything, it was to herself. Never did human being sit more loose to money, or more jealously watch over the distribution of it, that every shilling she possessed should be employed to the glory of God. But

with all her fortune and self-denial, her finances were inadequate to her calls."

In order to carry out consistently these feelings concerning the use of money, she relinquished her equipage, livery servants, elegantly furnished residences, which belonged to persons of her birth and station by the requirements of almost universal usage for many centuries. Her apparel was exceedingly simple and economical. *She sold all her jewels.* They consisted of "drops," "pearls," "seed pearls," "gold box," etc., amounting to about thirty-seven hundred dollars, with which she purchased a small chapel for the poor. She thus dispensed with "gold" and "costly array," dedicating all she had to God.

She not only gave as opportunity presented, but *sought* occasion to do so. She wrote at one time to Dr. Doddridge, who was at the head of a school of young men, begging him to find some worthy indigent young men, whose heart God was evidently moving toward the work of the ministry, that she might assist them

in obtaining a suitable education. And when that great and good man himself was sick, and needed rest from labor, and a journey to a warmer climate, which his poverty, in view of his duty to his family, forbade, she placed in his hands about *four thousand dollars*. Twenty-five hundred of this she gave herself, and begged the remainder from her wealthy friends. With this timely relief, the good man's last moments were made free from solicitude, and his mind left to employ all its powers in the work of God.

Her well-tried and valued friend Berridge was the subject also of her generosity. Although Berridge was a bachelor, and had a considerable income from his parish at Everton, besides having inherited some property, yet he impoverished himself for the good of the cause of Christ. Full of generous impulses, if anything remained in his own purse it was at the disposal of a suffering brother, without reference to his own future necessities.

Having in this way brought himself into

financial embarrassment, he was taken seriously ill in the midst of his necessities. Hearing that he was unable to attend to his professional business, the countess wrote him a letter of condolence, and invited him to make her a visit. In answer, he tells her he cannot, for he is as “flat as a flounder,” and, besides, he has no coat fit to appear out in, even at Everton, and concludes by asking her “to patch it up by a small bank bill.”

By return of mail the bill for the supply of his temporal necessities was forwarded by her ladyship.

So ready was the countess to give at every call for aid, that some of her friends withheld from her, in some cases, a knowledge of the occasions for giving. They knew that her liberality exceeded her income.

Captain Scott, at one time, with some other ministers, having a case presented to them, and believing that the countess would give, though she could not well afford to do so, resolved not

to acquaint her with it. By some means, however, her ladyship heard of the case, and also of the combination to keep it from her. At this she was exceedingly grieved. When she met Captain Scott she burst into tears. "I have never," she exclaimed, "taken anything ill at your hands before. But *this*, I think, is very unkind." And, as if to compensate the applicant for the wrong which she thought was purposed against him, she gave him five hundred dollars.

In the exercise of this spirit of benevolence she gave away, in the course of her Christian life, more than *five hundred thousand dollars*.

How much better than to have kept it cankering in her coffers. How much wiser than to have left it to her children, thereby to beguile them from the path of Christian integrity. How glorious to have had the privilege of converting so much earthly treasure into the imperishable treasure of heaven.

It must not be supposed that this large expenditure for Christ was made from such world-

ly abundance as not to be felt. Far from it. She gave until it became a sacrifice.

At one time she stood engaged for twenty-five hundred dollars toward a chapel. Her frequent charitable drafts had exhausted her purse, and she could not meet the demand. The friend who called for it reproved her for such *extreme* liberality. But before he left the mail brought her letters. As she opened one her countenance brightened, and her tears began to flow. It read thus: "An individual who has heard of Lady Huntingdon's exertions to spread the Gospel, requests her acceptance of the inclosed draft to assist her in the laudable undertaking."

It was for *twenty-five hundred dollars*, the exact sum for which she stood pledged. She handed it to the friend who had called for her subscription, saying, "Take it, pay for the chapel, and be no longer faithless, but believing."

Such were some of the excellent qualities of Lady Huntingdon. She had her weak points

of character, but we need not detail them. She knew and lamented them. But so many and great were her virtues, that those who were constantly with her were her most ardent admirers. With them she was ever "*my dear lady.*" The grace of God was conspicuous in her most private as well as public walk. She bore habitually the image of Christ.

If we should mention one failing of Lady Huntingdon, as perhaps the most noticeable one, we should refer to what might be an almost unavoidable perversion of her greatest excellence. She seemed, sometimes, too persistent, if not obstinate in her purpose. Accustomed to assume great responsibilities, and to be deferred to in matters of great importance, she necessarily cultivated habitual self-reliance. The following incident will illustrate our meaning:

The celebrated Rowland Hill was in the zenith of his popularity when the Spafields Chapel went into successful operation. In former years the countess had assisted him

when others refused him fellowship. But they were not formed for companionship with each other, and they had labored more recently apart. But the committee of Spafields society wished to avail themselves of so popular a gift as Hill's, particularly as he had made a special request to be permitted to occupy, at times, the pulpit. This wish was supported by influential mutual friends. The request was sent to her ladyship, and the following answer was returned: "Without reserve to you, my kind friend, and with every best wish to dear Mr. Venn, Mr. Hill CANNOT preach *for me*. This must not be pressed. When we meet I will explain fully my present reasons. Should any future day prove it expedient, it may be reconsidered, but be assured it cannot be NOW."

But there was no unkindness, though there might have been too much *firmness* in this. Who will imitate her virtues, and manifest fewer infirmities?

## CHAPTER XV.

## PARTING.

THE venerable countess's labors have been briefly recounted. We come to contemplate her at the evening of life, and in her experience with the last enemy.

For some years before her death, she naturally thought much of some plan to perpetuate the work God had, for so many years, committed to her hands. After much deliberation and counsel with her best and wisest friends, she employed a committee at London, or "Acting Association," as they were called, to draw up a plan of government for her Connection after her decease. The result of their labors she fully approved, and caused it to be printed, and, with a circular from herself recommending it, to be sent to all her chapels.

But it met with opposition from her bosom friends, and she acknowledged, with sad feelings, her inability, at her advanced age, to stem the current which bore it away. To the last her judgment clung to it as the best provision for her people. But not being able to leave a denominational organization, she left the chapels which she still held as private property, "with all her houses and furniture therein, with the residue of her estates and effects," to four trustees. Only seven chapels were claimed, and one of these was heavily mortgaged; the rest had been given to the societies worshiping in them. The property thus bequeathed she expected the legatees to use for the same great end to which she had ever aimed, "relying on the almighty power and good grace of Jesus Christ, her God and Saviour, to dispose their hearts in all things which might tend most to his honor and glory, and the real good of mankind, in the spreading and promoting his glorious and precious Gospel, as well abroad as at home."

To this disposition of her worldly effects her only surviving child and heir, Lady Moira, made no objections.

This will was signed in 1790. The countess was now eighty-four years of age. Though still bearing her armor, and fighting the “good fight,” she was pressed with the weight of years. To the children of God, she appeared like Anna in the temple, waiting for the coming of her Lord.

A pious person from the country called upon her about this time. Having spent a short time in pleasing conversation, he remarked, as he passed from her house: “What a lesson! Can a person of her noble birth, nursed in the lap of grandeur, live in such a house, so meanly furnished? and shall I, a tradesman, be surrounded with luxury and elegance? From this moment I shall hate my house, my furniture, and myself, for spending so little for God and so much for folly.”

The grace of God was the ground of her hope. Her peace was not that of an innocent

person, but of a redeemed sinner. She did not plead what *she* had done, but what Christ had suffered for her. She looked, not only with composure, but delight on the grave.

A short time before her last sickness, one of the clergymen whom she honored with her confidence, spending a few moments with her as he passed through London, she spoke of herself in a manner that will illustrate her religious experience at this time.

“I feel myself a poor worm.”

“Drawing near Him, what hope could I entertain, if I did not know the efficacy of his blood, and turn, as a prisoner of hope, to this stronghold?”

“How little could anything of mine give rest to a departed soul! so much sin and self mixing with the best, and always so short of what we owe!”

“’Tis well for us, He can pity and pardon; and we have confidence that he will do so.”

“I confess, my dear friend, I have no hope but that which inspired the dying malefactor at

the side of my Lord. I must be saved in the same way, as freely, as fully, or not at all."

The friend remarked, that though we devoted our lives to the service of God, and died for his cause, we could not plead this for comfort in a dying hour. To which she replied, earnestly, "No. A sinner is blessed and secure when he can say, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner,' and is found accepted of the Beloved."

To a paper of importance, written a few days before her death, she appended the following sentiments :

"As I have always lived the poor, unworthy pensioner of the infinite bounty of my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, so I do hereby declare, that all my present peace and future hope of glory, either in whole or in part, depend wholly, fully, and finally upon his alone merits, committing my soul into his arms unreservedly, as a subject of his sole mercy to all eternity."

When a blood-vessel broke, which was the commencement of her last illness, she said to

Lady Anne Erskine, on being asked how she did: "I am well, well forever; I see, wherever I turn my eyes, whether I live or die, nothing but victory."

Toward the close of the bleeding she repeated, with all the energy her weakness would allow: "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh. O! Lady Anne, the coming of the Lord draweth nigh! The thought fills my heart with joy unspeakable!"

At another time she said: "All the little ruffles and difficulties which surround me, and all the pains I am exercised with in this poor body, through mercy, affect not the settled peace and joy of my soul!"

A day or two before the closing scene, just as she had come from her room to her elbow-chair, she exclaimed with emotion: "The Lord hath been present with my soul this morning in a remarkable manner. What he means to convey to my mind I know not. It may be my approaching departure. My soul is filled with glory. I am as in the element of heaven itself."

Weakened by a complicated disorder, she was, a week preceding her departure, confined to her bed. But her powers of mind were unimpaired. They were employed constantly, either in expressions of hope or thanksgiving concerning her own spiritual state, or in directing the work of God. Almost the last moments of life were occupied in suggestions concerning a mission to Otaheite, in the South Seas. When unable to hold a pen, she dictated a letter in relation to this project. Thus her ruling passion was strong in death: a sanctified passion for *work*, *work* in the cause of Christ.

She expressed no impatience under her own pain, but great tenderness for those who night and day watched, with faithful attention and Christian love, at her bedside.

She appeared, during the tedious nights and days of pain and sickness, engaged in prayer, and animated with thankfulness for the unutterable mercies which she had experienced, saying: "I am encircled in the arms

of love and mercy. I long to be at home. O! I long to be at home." A little before she died, she said repeatedly: "I shall go to my Father to-night. Can he forget to be gracious? Is there any end to his loving kindness?"

With her expiring breath she whispered, "My work is done. I have nothing to do but to go to my Father."

The reader will recollect that, during the early part of Lady Huntingdon's widowhood, she resided at Ashby, a village of the Huntingdon domain. Here is the church in which the Hastings family had for generations worshiped. It is an ancient, handsome stone edifice. It consists of a nave and two aisles, separated by four lofty arches springing from the fluted pillars. The chancel is neat and spacious. On each side is a large chapel, projecting considerably wider than the church; that on the north is converted into a vestry room; *the south is the burial place of the Hastings family.* Here, under a mural

monument, lies Lord Huntingdon, and beside him his eminent countess. Her inscription informs the visitor that she died June 17, 1791.

So the laborers in the vineyard of God fall. One by one they pass away. A few months only before the countess, John Wesley had died. Whitefield had anticipated her final triumph more than twenty years. Her early friend Charles Wesley had entered into rest. John Fletcher, greatly beloved notwithstanding polemic battles and differences of opinions, had for many years participated in the rapturous song of the redeemed.

Of her distinguished co-laborers, Berridge, Romaine, and Venn remained. But *now* these chosen instruments, and those saved by their agency, both the “noble few” and the humble poor, have met to ascribe a common praise “to Him who hath redeemed them by his blood.”

THE END.



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